



Above from left: BARC Board Director Jay Lewis, Del. Chris Runion, BARC Board Vice President Mike Sandridge, COO Chris Botulinski and CEO Bill Buchanan.

Powering Progress Through Policy: Legislative Day 2024

Looking out for their members' best interests, Virginia electric cooperative leaders and directors gathered in Richmond to visit with elected officials about proposed legislation on Jan. 22.

Co-op representatives from 12 of 13 Virginia electric co-ops headed to the newly opened General Assembly building for in-person meetings with legislators and staffers. They collaboratively presented a strong front, engaging with more than

40 legislators, effectively communicating the cooperative difference and outlining legislative priorities for the year.

Discussions focused on bills filed at the General Assembly that could affect electric cooperatives and their members. Bills of particular concern were HB 800 and SB 713, which could shift make-ready construction costs onto 1.5 million rural ratepayers, potentially hiking utility bills by up to 50%. Cooperative representatives emphasized the importance of opposing this legislation to protect the interests of their members and ensure a fair broadband deployment process.

In attendance from BARC was Chief Executive Officer Bill Buchanan, Chief Operations Officer Chris Botulinski, Jay Lewis and Michael Sandridge representing the BARC board of directors.

BARC Electric Cooperative and BARC Connects CEO Bill Buchanan stress the importance of opportunities to engage with policymakers. "These in-person meetings educate our legislators on our

cooperative principles while advocating for electric cooperatives, and ultimately what is best for our membership and the communities that we serve."

BARC Board Vice President Michael Sandridge notes the importance of making a strong showing this year. "Legislative Day continues to be a valuable exercise that shows our collective strength and influence as we unite to reinforce already strong relationships with veteran legislators, and educate new legislators on the cooperative business model," he says.

Through a strong showing of unity around our legislative agenda, cooperatives can speak with one powerful voice in the halls of government.



BARC leadership advocates for members during a meeting with Del. Chris Runion.

BARC ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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

Come join us on Facebook
facebook.com/BARCElectricCooperative



Chief Executive Officer
Bill Buchanan

Local Pages Editor
Amanda Cunningham

BARC Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

BARC SmartHub Coming Soon!

Your life is busy and managing your account can feel complicated — with the new BARC Electric SmartHub tool it won't be. Save time and money by managing your account anytime from anywhere. Here are some of the ways SmartHub will put you in control of your account.

How Can BARC Electric Cooperative's SmartHub Help You Control Your Electric Account?

Our SmartHub web portal or mobile app will keep you informed and will show you where to save time and money on your bills.



Billing & Payments: No more waiting for your bill to arrive in the mail — access your bill anytime from anywhere. Save time with easy payment options to avoid late fees and service interruptions.



Alerts & Notifications: Stay informed on important account events via email or text messages. Receive the information you need to make the right decisions about your account.



Energy-Use Monitoring: Worrying about energy use or surprising bill amounts can be stressful. When you know what devices are using the most energy, you can make money-saving decisions about your account. Imagine opening your bill and seeing an amount less than expected.



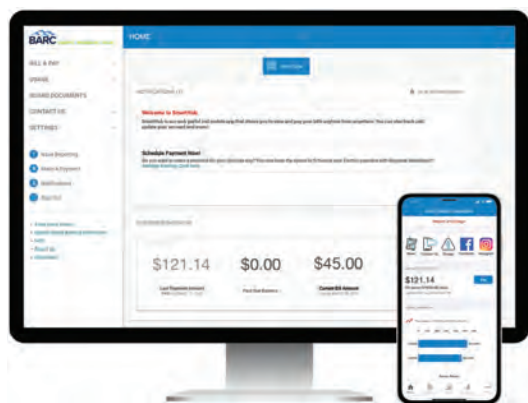
Paperless Billing: What if you could save some time and a tree at the same time? Activate SmartHub paperless billing, an eco-friendly way to instantly access your bill.



Attention BARC Connects Customers: Your SmartHub account will now be available for both your electric account and your broadband account needs! After April 3, you will be able to access your electric account through your current SmartHub login.

SmartHub gives you complete control over your account by giving you the tools that deliver the right information at the right time, so you can make the right decisions about your account.

Visit the BARC Electric SmartHub support page at barcelectric.com/smarthub for more information.



Important Information

After April 3, 2024, we'll be launching our new SmartHub app and billing layout. This new system features a lot of new tools to help you save time and money.

Watch for additional information and key dates in the next issue of *Cooperative Living*.

Some payment options will be unavailable **during the week prior to launch**. Payments will not post to your account until the new system is in place. Because of this transition, late charges will be waived during this time.

Visit barcelectric.com/smarthub for more information.

ATTENTION AUTO PAY ELECTRIC MEMBERS!



After April 3, 2024, you will be required to re-register for Auto Pay in our new Electric SmartHub payment system!



Auto Pay Re-Registration

After April 3, 2024, we are switching to a new payment system.

If you are currently signed up for Auto Pay with a credit card, this will affect your account. We have provided some dates and important information for you to easily re-register for Auto Pay in our new system.



Web & Mobile Instructions

After we launch on April 3, 2024, we will have instructions on how to register your account and re-activate your Auto Pay settings.

You will find the instructions on our SmartHub support page at:
barcelectric.com/smarthub.



Need Some Assistance?

Following launch day after April 3, 2024, if you have questions or issues with the registration process, you may contact customer service at (800) 846-2272.

***YOU CANNOT REGISTER UNTIL THE
APRIL 3, 2024, LAUNCH DATE.**

Dates and Information

BARC Electric Cooperative is excited about an upgrade heading your way on April 3, 2024! **If you are currently registered for Auto Pay in our system with a credit card**, mark the following dates on your calendar:



Launch Day is April 3, 2024

Approximately five days prior to our launch on April 3, we will be shutting down our online payment processes as we transition to our new Electric SmartHub payment system.

Please check out our SmartHub support page at barcelectric.com/smarthub for important dates and information regarding your accounts.

This information will include the last day you can make debit or credit card payments prior to our launch date of April 3!

Cash and check payments can still be made in our lobby or checks can be mailed.

What to do on or after April 3.

Visit our Electric SmartHub support page at barcelectric.com/smarthub to find links and instructions on how to register your account.

YOU MUST REGISTER to re-signup for Auto Pay with your credit or debit card.

Take advantage of all the new features like energy-use details, account history, outage reporting and easy bill payment. You can also contact customer service with your smartphone, tablet or computer.

Take a step back in time to Highland County: 'Virginia's Sweet Spot'



Travel scenic back roads and majestic mountain byways to the 64th Annual Highland County Maple Festival. Since 1959, visitors have been drawn to Highland County to tour real maple sugar camps for a cultural and culinary adventure. In 1999, the Library of Congress designated the Highland County Maple Festival a "local legacy." In 2014, the governor of Virginia signed a bill into law designating the festival as the official maple festival of Virginia.

Each year, tens of thousands of visitors are drawn to this unspoiled, rural region of Virginia to celebrate the "opening" of the trees and observe the process of making maple syrup. Sugar camp tours provide a unique and educational experience that portrays a

rapidly vanishing way of American life. In 2024, there will be 10 open sugar camps with unique techniques and stories for you to explore for free. In addition to pancake and buckwheat cake meals, famous maple doughnuts and live entertainment, over 100 high-quality juried arts and crafts vendors take part in the festival each year.

Enjoy "Virginia's Sweet Spot" at the Highland County Maple Festival on March 9-10 and 16-17. Learn more at highlandcounty.org/maple-festival or by calling 540-468-2550.

Have fun at this award-winning countywide festival!

**VIRGINIA
IS FOR
MAPLE SYRUP
LOVERS**

Attention residents in:

- BACOVA (new!)
- HOT SPRINGS
- BOLAR
- MUDDY RUN
- FALLING SPRINGS
- WARM SPRINGS

You are now eligible for service! Visit barconnects.net.



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THE BEST CONNECTIVITY

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- Phone service options!*
- Free mobile app!*
- AND no contracts!*



Connect today:
barconnects.net
1-800-846-2272

**If you are in these areas and you don't see your address, please call us to check eligibility.*

BARC
Connects
FIBER BROADBAND



*Daylight Saving
Time Reminder:
March 10, 2024*

BARC makes owning solar easier!

**TOGETHER
WE SHINE
BRIGHTER**



"The application and loan approval were lightning fast. The Tiger Solar crew were friendly and efficient. And of course, we love our new, small electric bills." - MARK N.

CONTACT BARC TODAY!

Billy Reid at 1-800-846-2272
www.barcelectric.com/solar

