

10 Things You May Not Know About Power Restoration

BE PREPARED BEFORE A STORM STRIKES

In the event of a power outage, be prepared by keeping the following items in an easy-to-find emergency supply kit.

- WATER**
Three-day supply, one gallon per person per day.
- TOOLS**
Flashlight, extra batteries, manual can opener, battery-powered or hand-crank radio, NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert.
- FIRST-AID KIT AND PRESCRIPTIONS**
First-aid supplies, hand sanitizer and at least one week's supply of prescriptions and medications.

Learn more at www.ready.gov
Source: American Red Cross, Federal Emergency Management Agency.

As the CEO of BARC Electric Cooperative, I'm accustomed to members' questions about power outages and why it can take time to get the lights back on. Given our reliance on electricity, there's simply never a good time to be without it.



Manager's Message

Bill Buchanan
CEO, BARC Electric Cooperative

This month, we'd like to shed light on our restoration process to help our members understand what may be happening behind the scenes. Here are 10 things you might not know about restoration:

1. We need you. When your power goes out, it might be just at your home or small section of a neighborhood. There is a chance we may not know about it, and no one has reported it. We rely on you to let us know if your power is out by calling 1-800-846-2272, logging in to your member portal or using the SmartHub app.

2. Our employees might be affected too. Because BARC is a local electric cooperative owned by the members we serve, our employees are local too. They are your neighbors, friends and familiar community volunteers. When you're without power, our people might be too.

3. It's a team effort. Every one of BARC's employees are working to get your power restored as soon as possible. Our member services representatives are taking your calls, engineers and field staff are surveying damage, our vegetation management team is clearing hazards, dispatchers are organizing crews, and communicators are keeping everyone informed of progress or potential dangers. When your power goes out, we all work together as quickly and safely as possible to get you back to normal.

4. We assess the situation first. Every outage is different, and we don't know how dangerous it is or what equipment might need to be replaced. When responding to outages, we first need to

see what happened, then figure out what materials we need and a plan for how to fix the problem(s) without compromising electric flow for the rest of our members.

5. Restoration is normally prioritized by the largest number of members we restore power to in the shortest amount of time. Our crews focus on responding first to public safety issues and critical services like hospitals. Then we complete work that impacts the largest of number of people first.

6. Our employees face many dangers. Besides working around high voltage electricity, our crews are on alert for wild animals, weather elements, falling trees and fast-moving cars. (If you ever drive past one of our vehicles, please do so slowly.)

7. Flickering lights are a good thing. Some folks mistake flickering lights for outages, but these "blinks" are important because they indicate our equipment worked and prevented a possible outage likely caused by wayward animals or stray tree limbs on the lines.

8. You need a backup plan. We do our best to help those who need it, but if you depend on electricity for life support purposes, you must have a back-up plan — remember, we don't always know how long restoration efforts will take. If you're unsure what to do, call us so we can help you prepare an emergency location.

9. Our employees have to plan, and eat. If you ever see our trucks in a restaurant parking lot while your power is out, know that sometimes our employees huddle in a safe, common area to map out their plan for getting your power back on.

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BARC ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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Chief Executive Officer
Bill Buchanan

Local Pages Editor
Amanda Cunningham

BARC Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Power Restoration

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Also, our crews work long hard hours during outages and need to take time for meals just like everyone else.

10. Sometimes it's a waiting game.

Our portion of the power grid is connected to other electric utilities, and we maintain positive relationships with power providers interconnected to our system. If our outage is due to an issue from their feed into our system, we must let them do their repairs and be mindful of what they're going through to fix it.

We do our best to avoid power disruptions, but they are inevitable from time to time. If the lights go out, know that your co-op team is working as quickly and safely as possible to restore power. If you experience an outage, please let us know by reporting it through your SmartHub app, member portal or by calling 1-800-846-2272.

COMMON CAUSES OF POWER OUTAGES

There is never a good time for the power to go out, but if it happens on a sunny day, you might be left wondering why. Here are the most common causes of a power outage.

WEATHER

High winds, snow and ice can cause tree limbs to fall on power lines. Other weather effects, like wildfires and lightning strikes, can cause major damage to equipment.

CRITTERS

Squirrels, birds, snakes and other animals can inadvertently contact power lines, causing short circuits and disruptions to electrical supply.

Scheduled MAINTENANCE

Occasionally, we plan outages to perform upgrades or repairs to parts of the local grid.

ACCIDENTS

Vehicles can crash into utility poles, bringing down power lines. Construction and excavation work can also result in disruptions to underground lines.

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Capital Credits Explained



WHAT ARE CAPITAL CREDITS?

As a not-for-profit cooperative, BARC is more than just an electric provider, and you're more than just a customer. Members are owners with a financial interest in the cooperative, and capital credits are one of several benefits unique to cooperative membership.

When revenues exceed expenses, BARC doesn't technically earn profits; instead, it earns margins. Each year, these margins are assigned to members in proportion to the amount of electricity billed to them during that year. These capital credits reflect your ownership in BARC but are not immediately returned to you. The cooperative uses capital credits to fund operating activities and reduce borrowing, with the intent of repaying them to members in later years.

A retirement cycle is the period between the allocation (accrual) and retirement (return) of capital credits. BARC operates on a 20- to 30-year retirement cycle reflective of the average borrowing terms with its lenders.

WHERE DOES THE MONEY COME FROM?

Member-owned, not-for-profit electric co-ops set rates to generate enough money to pay operating costs, make payments on any loans, and provide an emergency reserve. At the end of each year, we subtract operating expenses from the operating revenue collected during the year. The balance is called an operating margin.

HOW ARE MARGINS ALLOCATED?

Margins are allocated to members as capital credits based on their purchases from the cooperative — how much power the member used. Member purchases may also be called patronage.

ARE CAPITAL CREDITS RETIRED EVERY YEAR?

Each year, the BARC Board of Directors makes a decision on whether to retire capital credits. This decision

is based on many factors, including restrictions put in place by government institutions and the overall financial health of the cooperative. During some years, the co-op may experience high growth in the number of new accounts, or severe storms may result in the need to spend additional funds to repair lines. These and other events might increase costs and decrease member equity, causing the board not to retire capital credits. It is necessary to maintain an appropriate amount of equity in every business in order to stay in business. For this reason, BARC's ability to retire capital credits reflects the cooperative's strength and financial stability. The board alone decides whether to retire capital credits.

DO I LOSE MY CAPITAL CREDITS IN THE YEARS THE CO-OP DECIDES NOT TO MAKE RETIREMENTS?

No. All capital credits allocated for every year members have been served by BARC are maintained until such time as the board retires them. Prior to this year, BARC retired all capital credits through 1997.

HOW MUCH HAS BARC PAID IN TOTAL CAPITAL CREDITS RETIREMENTS SINCE IT BEGAN IN 1938?

BARC has paid \$13 million in capital credits retirements to current and former members to date.

WHAT IF I HAVE MOVED?

If you move or no longer have electric service with BARC, it is important that you inform the cooperative of your current address, so that future retirements can be properly mailed to you. If you purchased electricity during the years being retired, then you are entitled to a capital credit retirement, even if you move out of the BARC service area. If it has your current address, then BARC will send your retirement check by mail.

BARC Supports Freedom Food Festival



BARC lineman and country music artist Will Reid performs live at this year's Freedom Food Festival in downtown Lexington.

Mother Nature cooperated and provided sunny weather for the 2024 Freedom Food Festival on Main Street in Lexington, VA! The competition was hot, as eight nonprofit organizations teamed up with local kitchens and caterers for an Independence Day cook-off, offering attendees choices from a wide variety of meals. The music was rocking with local and regional bands, including S.J. McDonald, Will Reid and Love Canon. Attendance was high, and the festival sold over 2,000 meal tickets.

To ensure the nonprofits could quickly verify QR-code meal tickets and complete credit card transactions on site, consistent Wi-Fi was needed along Main Street. BARC Connects installed numerous "hot spots," providing a strong connection and allowing for hundreds of financial transactions to occur simultaneously.

"BARC Connects provided excellent customer service," states Patty Williams, director of marketing for Rockbridge Regional Tourism. "A couple nonprofits were experiencing a weak connection. BARC rushed over and installed another router on Nelson Street just before the festival kicked off. The nonprofits reported service was great and was a huge improvement from the previous year."

Learn more at lexingtonvirginia.com.

Maintaining and Improving Reliability

Herbicide and right-of-way maintenance areas identified

BARC Electric strives to balance maintaining beautiful surroundings and ensuring a reliable power supply by keeping power lines clear in rights-of-way.

While we recognize and appreciate the beauty of trees, there are benefits to tree trimming in ROW areas.

A right-of-way is the land used to construct, maintain, replace or repair underground and overhead power lines. Rights-of-way enable the co-op to provide clearance from trees and other obstructions that could hinder the power line installation, maintenance or operation. ROW areas are typically on public lands or located near a business or home. Regardless, BARC must be able to maintain the power lines above and below the ROW.

The overall goal of BARC's vegetation-management program is to provide reliable power to members while maintaining the beauty of our community. Proactive vegetation management benefits co-op members.

HERBICIDE MAINTENANCE AREAS

BARC continues to expand its vegetation-management programs and now has a forester on staff. Cody Shifflett proactively monitors rights-of-way while overseeing crews to better increase

reliability. BARC crews and approved contractor crews will be providing targeted herbicide maintenance in the following areas in 2024 and 2025:

- Warm Springs
- Hot Springs
- Falling Springs
- South Buffalo
- Bacova/Warm Springs Transmission

More information about targeted herbicide application is available at barcelectric.com/herbicide.

RIGHT-OF-WAY MAINTENANCE AREAS

Trees and overgrowth are leading causes of power outages. To protect against tree-caused outages, and to ensure access to our lines, BARC is committed to preventing trees from interfering with transmission and distribution lines and poles. Below are areas scheduled for maintenance in 2024 and 2025:

- Johnson Creek South
- Falling Springs East
- Falling Springs South
- Lake Moomaw
- Johnson Creek North

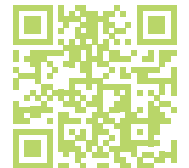
BARC is committed to improving the quality of life in the communities it serves. Part of that mission is ensuring the cooperative provides safe, reliable and affordable electricity to its members.



before



Right-of-way maintenance was recently provided at Pads Creek, significantly improving system reliability and reducing the potential for service interruptions.



► Learn more by scanning the code or visit barcelectric.com/right-of-way.

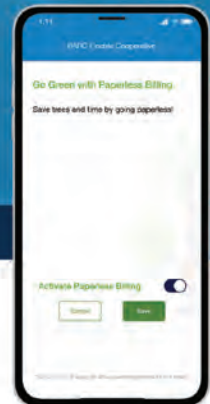


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***THANK YOU TO OUR MEMBERS for their patience during this system transition!**