

Why Vegetation Management Matters

There's something timeless about trees. They ground us. They remind us of where we've been, and they stretch toward what lies ahead. Here in our community, we take pride in the natural beauty that surrounds us.

At the same time, we share another responsibility — one that's just as essential to our daily lives. The responsibility to keep the lights on, to power our homes and businesses, to make sure that when you flip a switch, the energy you depend on is there.

That's why BARC works every day to strike a careful balance between preserving the beauty we cherish and delivering the reliable electricity you expect.

One of the most important ways we do that is through regular tree trimming and vegetation management.

Now, it may not always be obvious, but keeping lines clear of overgrown vegetation plays a major role in preventing power outages. We've all seen what can happen when severe weather rolls in — strong winds, heavy ice or sudden storms can bring down branches and even entire trees, damaging power lines and poles. In



fact, nearly half of all power outages can be traced to trees and vegetation coming into contact with electrical infrastructure.

That's why you may see BARC crews or our trusted contractors working in neighborhoods throughout the year. Our crews are highly trained and certified, following the latest industry standards to ensure the job is done safely and effectively. Their work might seem routine, but it's anything but — it's a proactive step that helps prevent problems before they start.

And it's not just good practice — it's required. Electric utilities across the country are obligated to manage vegetation near power lines. Scheduled trimming helps remove dead or weakened limbs and keeps fast-growing trees from becoming hazards. It's about staying one step ahead, especially as we prepare for the increasing frequency and intensity of severe weather events.

We're also using new tools and technologies to do this work smarter. Through drone inspections, for example, crews can monitor power lines and surrounding vegetation more efficiently, reducing costs while improving accuracy. These small but powerful tools allow us to identify potential risks early and respond quickly.

Beyond reliability and efficiency, there's another reason this work matters: safety.

Electricity is a powerful force, and when trees grow too close to power lines, that power can become dangerous. Branches that touch lines — or even come close

— can carry electrical current. Children climbing trees in their own yards may not realize the risk. During storms, fallen trees can also create hazardous conditions not only for families but also for our lineworkers working to restore service.

There's also a financial reality to consider. Preventative maintenance — like tree trimming — is far more cost-effective than repairing widespread damage after an outage. Left unchecked, overgrown vegetation can lead to more frequent disruptions and higher costs for everyone. A thoughtful, strategic vegetation management program helps keep those costs down for our members.

You can help, too. When planting new trees, consider their mature height and distance from nearby power lines. Trees expected to grow up to 40 feet should be planted at least 25 feet away from overhead lines. Larger trees — that exceed 40 feet — should be planted at least 50 feet away. If you're landscaping near pad-mounted transformers, keep shrubs at least 10 feet from the front and 4 feet from the sides to allow safe access for crews.

If your neighborhood has underground lines, don't forget to call 811 before digging. It's a simple step that can prevent serious accidents.

At the end of the day, we all want the same thing: a community that's safe, resilient and beautiful. At BARC, we're proud to be part of that effort. Our roots run deep here, just like the trees we work to care for.

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

Come join us on Facebook
facebook.com/BARCElectricCooperative



Chief Executive Officer
Bill Buchanan

Local Page Editor
Amanda Cunningham

BARC Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

An Office with a View.

BARC
Connects
FIBER BROADBAND

Extend your connection outside!
Effortless Wi-Fi for you:

- Backyard
- Patio
- Farm
- Workshop
and more!

\$20 per month
Installation fees apply

barconnects.net/outdoor
Order: 1-800-846-2272

BARC Annual Meeting Announcement

BARC will hold its **2026 Annual Meeting on Wednesday, July 15, at 2 p.m.** The meeting will take place at the Rockbridge office located at **1972 Big Spring Drive, Lexington, VA 24450 in the solar room.** If you are unable to attend the Annual Meeting, you may return a signed proxy, found on the back cover of July's *Cooperative Living* magazine. Members returning a signed proxy prior to the meeting will be eligible to participate in a prize drawing for \$150 in free electricity.

On May 20, 2026, a district meeting was held in District 4. On May 25, 2026, a district meeting was held in District 3. The purpose of these meetings was to select nominees to serve on the board of directors for a period of three years.

Listed below are the names of the nominees from their respective districts whose names will appear on the official ballot. Members may make additional nominations from the floor at the Annual Meeting.

- District 3 – Keith Swisher • District 4 – Albert J. “Jay” Lewis, II •

Bylaws Pertaining to Election of Directors

ARTICLE IV, SECTION 4.5: DIRECTOR ELECTIONS. Not less than seven days before an Annual Member Meeting or a Special Member Meeting at which Directors are to be elected, the Secretary of the Cooperative shall be responsible for mailing to each Member a list of the candidates selected at all District Meetings, the names to be arranged by districts. This list may be included with the notice of the meeting. At the meeting the Secretary of the Cooperative shall place in nomination the names of the official candidates of each district.

Additional nominations for Director for a particular district may be made from the floor. Election of the Directors shall be by printed or mimeographed ballot. The ballots shall list the candidates selected at the District Meetings, the names to be arranged by districts. A candidate nominated from the floor of the meeting may be voted for by writing in the name of the official candidate of the particular district. Each Member of the Cooperative present at the meeting in person or by proxy shall be entitled to vote for one candidate from each district. The candidate from each district receiving the highest number of votes at the meeting shall be considered elected as Director.

ARTICLE IV, SECTION 4.6: DIRECTOR TERMS. A Director's term is three (3) years (“Director Term”). The Cooperative shall stagger Director Terms by dividing the total number of authorized Directors into groups of approximately equal number and members will annually elect an approximately equal number of Directors. Decreasing the number of Directors or length of Director Terms may not shorten an incumbent Director's Director Term. Despite the expiration of a Director Term, the Director continues to serve until a new Director is elected, or until the number of Directors is decreased. Unless otherwise provided in these Bylaws, the Director Term of a Director filling a vacant Director's position is the remaining unexpired Director Term of the vacant Director's position.

BARC Communities



Graduation Announcement

On April 10, BARC lineman Samson Schindler, left, completed the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperative's Lineworker Technician Apprenticeship Program. The accomplishment marked four years of commitment and hard work to complete this challenging program. We are proud of Sam's dedication to becoming a journeyman for BARC.

Connecting With the Next Generation

BARC, along with the BARC Connects broadband team, recently joined forces to inspire local students, showcasing the essential work that keeps our community powered and connected.

At Central Elementary School's Career Day, our team met with students aged 4-12 to discuss electricity, power outages and safety around power lines. A BARC Connects fiber technician demonstrated how fiber service reaches homes and connects devices to the internet.

The Maury River after-school program joined us at our Highland Belle office, where students got a closer look at our operations. They met with linemen from our crews who demonstrated pole-climbing skills and showcased the specialized gear used to keep the lights on.

Our teams enjoyed engaging with our local students and appreciate the opportunity to inspire the next generation.



Scammers are finding new ways to get between you and your money. In the past month, people right here in our community have shared examples of how scammers are operating and targeting local residents.

Scammers often sound friendly and professional, making it difficult to distinguish them from legitimate employees. They often create a sense of urgency or confusion by threatening to discontinue service. You can protect yourself by following these three steps:

1. Use the "Phone Bill Rule"

Never call a phone number you find

through a Google search or random website. These are often fake numbers set up by scammers. Only call the phone number printed on your actual paper bill or listed on the back of your bank card. If you don't have the bill, ask a trusted family member to help you with SmartHub to verify your billing information.

2. BARC Will Never Ask For Sensitive Information

BARC, or any other legitimate company, will never ask you for your private PIN or full Social Security number to process a payment. If a caller requests your PIN or SSN to "verify your

identity" before you can pay a bill, hang up immediately. This is a major red flag.

3. Trust Your Gut Feeling

In real-life cases, the victims said afterward that the interaction "didn't feel right." One caller had a strange accent, and another worked for a company with a name that didn't match with BARC. If you feel uneasy, it is OK to say, "I'm going to hang up and call the main office directly." A legitimate employee will never be offended by you wanting to be safe.

Stay Safe: Never share personal, financial or Social Security information through phone, text or email. If you are suspicious, hang up and verify by calling BARC directly at 1-800-846-2272. For your protection, BARC will never request your credit card, Social Security number or banking details through unsolicited calls or text messages.