

Members First!



**HANCOCK-WOOD
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

HANCOCK-WOOD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

Lineworkers are wired for service



Bill Barnhart
PRESIDENT & CEO

In the quiet hours before dawn breaks, while many of us are still nestled in our beds, lineworkers begin their day, often clad in flame-resistant clothing, safety goggles, rubber gloves, and thick, heavy boots.

They are the individuals who epitomize dedication to service in its purest form. As we celebrate Lineworker Appreciation Day on April 14, this is an important moment to reflect on the essential role they play in our daily lives.

Amid towering utility poles and power lines, lineworkers exhibit a strength that goes far beyond the physical. Whether battling inclement weather, troubleshooting technical problems, or navigating treacherous heights, lineworkers demonstrate resilience and a quiet determination to keep our lights on, our homes comfortable, and our communities connected.

Hancock-Wood Electric crews travel across our 10-county service territory, building, maintaining, and repairing parts of our local system. Their extraordinary skills ensure our homes remain connected to the grid, businesses stay operational, and emergency services remain accessible — a lifeline that connects us all.

In moments of crisis, when the lights go out and we find ourselves in the dark lineworkers emerge as beacons of hope. Their swift response restores normalcy, offering reassurance in times of uncertainty. Whether repairing storm-ravaged power lines or ensuring continuity during emergencies, their unwavering commitment illuminates life when we need it most.

Hancock-Wood lineworkers also answer the call beyond the boundaries of home. Our crews travel to fellow co-ops, near or far, when widespread outages occur and additional support is needed. Cooperation Among Cooperatives is one of our seven guiding principles, and no one embodies this core commitment better than lineworkers.

This month, as we celebrate the remarkable men and women who ensure reliable power, let's recognize their unwavering dedication to the local communities they serve. The next time you flip a switch, please take a moment to remember those who make it possible — lineworkers, who are wired for service and dedicated to illuminating life.



HWE line crew pictured from left: Lee Brodman, Ross Benton, Isaiah Zapata, Mark Mareches, Brandt Schulte, Jake Auld, Jim Casey, Isaac Gaietto, Jamie Cole, Wilson Otto, Josh Fuson, Clint Patterson and Ryan Stearns.
Not pictured Rob Schwartz, Rod Barnhisel, Dave Ervin, Josh Kitzler, Jeff Price, and Kevin VanDePerre.

Project Ohio brings electricity to remote village in Guatemala

On Friday, January 24, 15 volunteer lineworkers from 10 Ohio electric cooperatives returned home from an electrification mission in Guatemala. During the 17-day trip, the Project Ohio team successfully brought electricity to 93 homes in the remote village of Barejones, in the Jalapa region of Guatemala. The team was able to install primary and secondary conductors, set meter poles and pole-mounted lights, and perform in-home electrical work. The team also continued previous work done by Oklahoma Electric Cooperatives in establishing a distribution system to the village.

Hancock-Wood's Clint Patterson was on the team, and this was his second time volunteering for the Project Ohio program. "When asked if I would be interested in going to Guatemala again, I immediately said 'yes.' It's an opportunity to change lives, including mine," Clint said.

Additionally, thanks to generous donations made by Ohio electric cooperative employees, the team was able to repair the village school's septic system, build a fence around the school's playground, provide water filters for each house, school, and church in the village, and give shoes to the village children. The team also provided school supplies and equipment for the school. Hancock-Wood Electric Cooperative's President and Bill Barnhart said, "We are very proud of this team and Clint's dedication to represent electric cooperatives in Ohio." This was Ohio's fifth Project Ohio mission to Guatemala. Hancock-Wood linemen have assisted in three of the missions.



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Your thoughts and opinions on Hancock-Wood Electric help us better serve you.

In May, Hancock-Wood will be working with NRECA Market Research Services to complete member satisfaction surveys.

The random surveys will be conducted by phone and email, and not everyone will be contacted. If you are contacted, we would greatly appreciate a few minutes of your time to share your opinions about the cooperative. All information is confidential.

We strive to provide all member-owners with safe, affordable, reliable, and clean electric service. By participating in the survey, you will help us make decisions that benefit you, your family, and your neighbors.

Operation Round
Up program grants
\$16,700
to local
organizations

The Community Trust Fund board, which oversees the Operation Round Up Program, met for the first quarter grant cycle in February. Two grants were approved, totaling \$16,700. The following organizations received funding:

- **Center Township Fire Department** for new helmets and boots
- **Gliding Stars of Findlay** for ice show cost and insurance

If you are involved in a local nonprofit organization that is looking for funding for a special project, please reach out to us and learn more about how to apply for a grant by scanning the QR code.



Two co-op staff members complete leadership program



Pictured, from left: VP of Engineering and Operations Andy Fisher, President and CEO Bill Barnhart, and Safety Director Isaac Schonlau.

Congratulations to Vice President of Engineering and Operations Andy Fisher and Safety Director Isaac Schonlau on completing the Leadership Edge Program in 2024. The one-year Cooperative Leadership Edge program was hosted by Ohio's Electric Cooperatives and required six courses, two assessments, and a capstone project. Coursework focused on coaching employees, managing conflict, adapting communication approaches, carrying out difficult conversations, and delivering results.

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