

MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER



From rural Ohio to Capitol Hill

Cooperative leaders advocate for reliable, affordable energy

Each year, leaders from electric cooperatives around the country travel to Washington, D.C., to bring a unified message to Congress: Affordable, reliable energy is critical, and their constituents are counting on them to enact legislation that will keep it available for years to come and to oppose measures that threaten it.

This year, about 50 leaders from Ohio's electric cooperatives and our statewide organization joined some 1,500 colleagues from around the country for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's Legislative Conference on April 27 and 28. Board Trustee Ed Crawford and I were there to proudly represent Hancock-Wood Electric Cooperative.

Making our communities' voices heard in Washington is vital. Federal regulations affect generation and transmission cooperatives' ability to produce and transport the electricity needed to power the homes and businesses of members of distribution co-ops like Hancock-Wood. Federal policy also directly influences how efficiently and cost-effectively co-ops like ours can make system improvements to provide the reliable, affordable energy our members need and expect.

During the legislative conference, we met with senators and representatives who serve our members and discussed a number of key topics, including:

- **Streamlining federal permitting processes:** Long federal environmental reviews and litigation delay projects, raise costs, and increase risk for electric transmission and generation projects, grid maintenance and reliability work, and wildfire mitigation and vegetation management. We asked our elected officials to support bills to expedite federal permitting processes and to oppose efforts that would add bureaucratic red tape.

- **Modernizing FEMA disaster programs:** Without timely assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, rural consumers can face higher electric rates because co-ops rely on FEMA's Public Assistance Program for recovery funding after disasters.
- **Increasing RUS loan funding:** The need for Rural Utilities Service loans is at a record high as electrification of the economy, growth of data centers, and supply chain tightening drive growing demand for electric infrastructure financing.
- **Updating land-management and permitting rules:** Electric co-ops operate tens of thousands of miles of lines across federally managed lands, often in wildfire-prone areas and managing vegetation near these rights-of-way is essential to maintaining reliable electric service.



Bill Barnhart
PRESIDENT & CEO

Ohio's cooperatives provide consistent feedback to our elected officials, helping to keep them informed and engaged about matters important to co-ops, our members, and Ohio's rural communities.

Our annual legislative conference is a strong grassroots effort that reminds Congressional representatives of the important role electric cooperatives play. While each individual co-op might not be a loud voice in Washington, when we join together, we amplify our message for the benefit of our co-ops and our members.

Powering through summer storms

Summer is here, school is out, and families are making the most of time outdoors. While summer brings much fun in the sun, it can also bring the occasional severe storm. In the event of a power outage, you can trust that Hancock-Wood Electric Cooperative is ready to respond.

The most common cause of power outages is trees or branches falling across power lines. We work year-round — through right-of-way clearing — to reduce the risk that power lines in our service territory will be damaged by trees, branches, or other types of vegetation. Sometimes, however, despite our best efforts, our lines and substations can still take a hit — especially during major storms. When that happens, our first priority is to safely restore power to as many members as possible in the shortest amount of time.

We start by mobilizing our line crews and other critical staff. The biggest problems are handled first, including damage to transmission lines, which can serve tens of thousands of people. These problems must be corrected before we can focus on other areas where more localized outages may have occurred.

HWE's line crews inspect substations to determine whether they've been compromised, or if there could be an issue down the line. If the root of the problem is at the substation, addressing that can restore power to thousands of members.

Next, line crews check the service lines that deliver power into neighborhoods and communities. Lineworkers repair any damaged lines, restoring power to hundreds of people. If you continue to experience an outage once these repairs are made, there may be a problem with a tap line outside of your home or business. Make sure you notify HWE so crews can inspect these lines.

We do our best to avoid power outages, but sometimes Mother Nature has other plans. When summer storms cause outages, our whole team works to get the lights back on safely and as quickly as possible. In such situations, be sure to check the app HWE Connect, HWE's Facebook page, and our website.

Report an outage



HWE's control center and member services representatives are available 24/7, and members are encouraged to report any power outages through our phone lines at 800-445-4840, online at www.hwe.coop or through our mobile app, HWE Connect. Please do not report power outages on HWE's Facebook page or on other social media sites.

Be prepared for summer storms

When severe weather strikes, it pays to have a plan and be prepared. HWE encourages all members to have a storm emergency kit on hand. We recommend including the following items:

- water (one gallon per person per day, for several days)
- food (three-day supply of non-perishables)
- manual can opener
- flashlights and extra batteries
- first aid kit/prescriptions
- baby supplies
- extra batteries/wireless phone chargers
- moist towelettes
- extra pet food

If someone in your household relies on electricity for medical equipment, have a power outage plan in place. This could include having an alternative place to stay, keeping fully charged back-up batteries, or having a portable or standby backup generator.

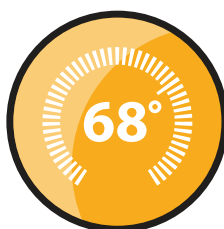
Same energy. Different impact.

The demand for electricity is typically highest in the late afternoon during peak energy hours. You can help lower demand by shifting when energy-intensive activities happen.



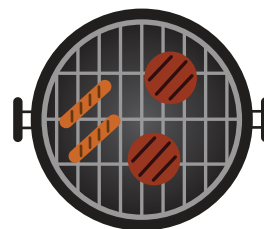
Shift appliance use to off-peak hours.

- Run the dishwasher before you go to bed.
- Use the oven earlier or later (during off-peak hours.)
- Space out use of major appliances.



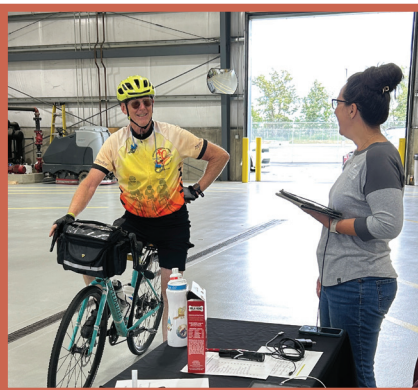
Use a programmable or smart thermostat.

- Automatically adjust the temperature setting during peak hours.
- Schedule home cooling cycles for efficiency.



Opt for low-energy alternatives during peak hours.

- Use small appliances like slow cookers or air fryers — or fire up the grill — instead of the oven.
- Air-dry clothes instead of using the dryer.
- Use ceiling fans for additional cooling.



Join us for Member Appreciation Week!

Please join us for our Member Appreciation Week on August 24 to 28! All members are invited to stop by our office from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and each membership will receive a \$15 bill credit along with a T-shirt (one T-shirt per membership) and more! Don't forget to bring your four-legged friend for a chance to win a PetSmart gift card! One pet will be chosen each day.

Operation Round Up program gives back to local organizations

In May, the Community Trust Fund Board reviewed and granted more than \$13,000 to the following organizations:

- Cooperative Family Fund
- Hancock County Performing Arts Center
- Kelleys Island Local School District
- North Baltimore Youth Travel League
- Special Deputies of Hancock County
- Swiss Community Historical Society

The next deadline for applications is on July 20, 2026.

Visit www.hwe.coop to find the application and requirements.

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PAYMENT OPTIONS

online, dropbox, office, by phone, or automatic bill pay

HAVE A STORY SUGGESTION?

Email your ideas to:
leslie.guisinger@hwe.coop

Members First! 
HANCOCK-WOOD
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative