

COOPERATIVE

REVIEW

For members of Union Power Cooperative

Let's Chat

Live Chat Feature Helps Improve Member Experience

Convenient, highly engaging, and easy to use are just a few qualities members love about our Live Chat feature – a communication channel Union Power introduced in 2017 as a part of our commitment to improving and providing exceptional member experiences. Since its inception, the chat feature has rendered significant results, offering members the ability to chat online with customer service representatives in real time, for faster, more efficient service.

Customer service remains a top priority and with the rise in our membership, we have a greater need to connect with our members in more ways than ever before. Live Chat has allowed us to provide our members with a quality level of service, and we are proud to say that our numbers are reflective of this. Within the last year, our chat feature received an overall chat satisfaction rating of 86%, with a total of 4,555 chats reported.

So, the next time you're looking for information about your bill, or interested in requesting general services such as a home energy audit or outdoor light repair, remember, our chat feature is here to make things easier! You can avoid wait times and interact with a



representative immediately by using the chat feature on our website at union-power.com. Representatives will be available to chat Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Please note:

- To initiate a chat, you will be asked to enter information such as the name, email address, phone number, and the last four digits of your SSN associated with your account. This security measure is in place to ensure your data is safe and to ensure we do not share or discuss sensitive information with anyone but you. Please make sure your information is always up-to-date.
- Payments and outage reports will not be accepted through Live Chat. We offer several payment options, which can be found on our website. Outage reports must be made through our automated outage line at 1-800-794-4423.

Get Pumped for Summer with Tips to Make Your Swimming Pool More Energy-Efficient



With summer just around the corner, many swimming pool owners are looking forward to some much-needed relaxation in their backyard oasis – but they are dreading the inevitable increase in their energy expenses. Owning a pool doesn't necessarily have to be expensive, time consuming or a huge waste of energy. You can still have outdoor fun while championing smart energy use.

Make a splash with your energy savings this summer by soaking up a few tips to improve your pool's energy efficiency:

Install an energy-saving pool pump and operate it efficiently

- Having an energy-efficient pool pump is an important part of the equation when considering pool maintenance options. Using a smaller, higher energy-efficient pump and operating it less frequently can help lower pool energy costs. We recommend putting pool pumps on timers with run times of 8-10 hours a day, depending on pool size.

Consider using a pool pump with variable speeds

- Since pool pumps are vital to performing so many pool functions, your pump's speed is the first place to look for energy savings. The speed at which a pump operates has a significant impact on the amount of energy it consumes. There are three types of pumps: single-speed, two-speed, and variable-speed. All have electric motors that power them, so it's important to understand how each of them function.
- **Single-speed pool pumps** operate at only one speed to power all pool functions – even those that do not require as much power. Single-speed pumps, by design, can't change their flow rate so they must be sized to perform the most demanding tasks.

- **Two-speed pool pumps** operate at either full speed (100%) or half-speed (50%). Because there are only two speed choices, it is difficult to fine-tune the flow rates required for maximum energy savings. However, when running at half-speed, a pump can provide significant energy savings, while still having the ability to run at full-speed when more water flow is needed.
- **Variable-speed pool pumps** operate over a range of speeds and can be "dialed-in" to the specific speeds needed for different functions such as basic circulation, heating, spa use, etc. These pumps allow homeowners to achieve the ideal filtration flow rate with the least amount of energy consumption.

Keep filters clear of debris

- Clogged filters force pool pumps to work even harder to circulate water. At first glance, a filter may not seem like an obvious spot to seek energy savings – that's because the filter itself is not the energy guzzler; the culprit is the energy demands the filter makes on your pool pump. With this in mind, your choice of filter and its maintenance makes a difference in your quest for an efficient pool.

As there are many factors (i.e., pool size, construction, etc.) that contribute to a pool's energy consumption, we recommend that you consult your pool supply/service company for specific information about cost-savings.

Union Power offers a variety of tools and resources to help you learn about your energy usage. Dive into our energy resources to ensure your summer isn't flooded with high utility bills by visiting our website at union-power.com/energysavingcalculators to access the Pool and Spa calculator!



Middle School Students 'Score' Summer Basketball Camp Scholarships

Thanks to the co-op's Touchstone Energy Sports Camp Scholarship program, Union Power Cooperative is proud to announce that Seth Winchester, of Mount Pleasant Middle School, Savannah Stoker, of Aquadale Elementary School, and Kaela Tyson, of Unionville Elementary School, will receive scholarships to attend basketball camp this month at two of the state's largest universities – North Carolina State University and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Seth will attend the Roy Williams Carolina Basketball Camp from June 22–26 at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Seth looks forward to being able to get hands-on training from one of the best basketball coaches and describes this opportunity as a “dream come true.”

Savannah will attend the North Carolina State University Wolfpack Women's Basketball Camp from June 9–12. Other than her love for the game, she highlighted that being a part of a team and working with others is what she loved most about the sport. Playing basketball also helps to boost her confidence. “I feel like I can do anything and I automatically feel like I'm home when I'm on the court,” Savannah said.

Kaela will also attend the Wolfpack Women's Basketball Camp this month and is looking forward to improving her running, shooting, dribbling, and defense skills. “It would be an honor to be in the Wolfpack Women's Basketball Camp because I love to play basketball and coming to NC State

University would be like a legacy for my family—my mom, dad, and grandfather all graduated from the university,” Kaela said.

The scholarship program has been instrumental in connecting local students with college coaches and student-athletes for 15 years and is proud to serve as the bridge to providing students with the opportunity to experience life on a college campus, while also learning fundamental skills that will help them become leaders on and off of the basketball court.

Seth, Savannah, and Kaela are among 50 middle school students statewide that were awarded scholarships this year, and were selected based on an application process that included academics, extracurricular activities, and an essay.

Congratulations to our winners and thank you to all who applied!



Powering up in Preparation for Summer Storms

Every time an outage call comes in, our system automatically signals an alarm to our Systems Operations Center.

While summer brings much fun in the sun, it can also bring the occasional severe storm; and with severe weather likely comes power outages. Restoring power after a major outage is no small task and involves lots of work; however, you can trust that Union Power is always prepared and ready to respond.

The major cause of most power outages comes from damage to power lines due to strong winds, fallen trees, and branches. We work hard, year-round through aggressive vegetation management to ensure power lines in our service territory stand little risk of being damaged by trees, branches, and other types of vegetation.

Despite our best efforts during major storms, extensive damage can occur to substations, power lines, and other electrical equipment. When this happens, our first priority is to safely restore power to as many members as possible in the shortest amount of time.

If you experience an outage, it is important to report it through our automated outage line. We urge members not to wait or assume that a neighbor will make the call. Sometimes, damage can occur on the service line between your house and a nearby pole, and your neighbor could still have power – so it is necessary that you initiate an outage call so that a service crew can be dispatched to your area.

Every time an outage call comes in, our system automatically signals an alarm to our Systems Operations Center. This helps us assess and determine the exact location of the outage. Once the call is received and the outage is located, we start mobilizing our line crews and other critical staff. Every phone line available is utilized

to take your outage calls. Areas with the greatest impact/problems are handled first – like damage to transmission lines, which serve tens of thousands of people. These problems must be corrected before we can focus on other areas where more localized damage may have occurred.

Our line crews inspect substations to determine if the problem starts there, or if there could be an issue down the line. If the root of the problem is at the substation, power can be restored to thousands of members at once.

Next, line crews check the service lines that deliver power into neighborhoods and communities. Line crews repair the damaged lines, restoring power to hundreds of people. If you continue to experience an outage, there may be damage to a tap line directly outside of your home or business. Make sure you notify Union Power so crews can inspect these lines.

Once an outage has been reported, members can call our outage line for an estimated time of restoration (ETOR), which gives them an estimated time to expect the power to be restored. During normal hours of operation or regular storms, we do well at keeping ETOR information up-to-date and as accurate as possible; however, during hurricanes and widespread outages, it's a little more difficult.

As always, we will do our best to avoid power outages, but sometimes Mother Nature has other plans. Please

remember, major outages can affect thousands of our members, so we appreciate your patience. Be sure to check out our website: union-power.com, Facebook: [Union Power Cooperative](#), and Twitter: [UnionPowerCoop](#) pages on your smartphone for the latest updates during a power outage.

Also, make sure you have all your essentials prepared and available in case of widespread outages. Create an emergency kit that contains flashlights, batteries, nonperishable food, blankets,

bottled water, and any necessary medications. If you know a storm is on its way, take shelter in a sturdy building and keep a fully charged phone nearby. Never drive through flooded roadways or over downed power lines.

Safety is the top priority for us and our members, and being prepared is the best way to ensure your family is safe during severe weather and other emergencies. At Union Power, we are preparing, too, and in the event of an outage, we will be ready.



Report an Outage

What is the best way to report an outage?

To report an outage, call 1-800-794-4423 and follow the call prompts. Our system uses your phone number to determine your service location - that's why it's important to update the phone number associated with your account. If your number has changed, please let us know by completing the form that comes in your monthly bill or by calling customer service.

How can I stay up-to-date on the progress of an outage?

The outage map on our website will show you the location and the status of every outage. If you don't see your outage on our map, be sure to give us a call to report your outage. We also post updates on widespread outages to our social media accounts.

STREET LIGHT Need Repair?



Take these steps:

1

Get the pole number from the yellow tag on the light pole.



2

Complete the "Street Light Repair" Form found at union-power.com/light-repair. Or, call 1-800-922-6840.

3

We will confirm your request and repairs will be scheduled.

**Union Power
Cooperative**
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Right-of-Way Access

Union Power crews need right-of-way access to our electrical equipment on your property at all times.

This equipment includes poles, transformers, meters, and all overhead and underground equipment. Unobstructed access to our equipment helps our crews restore your power more quickly during outages. It also aids crews in performing necessary repairs and maintenance on our equipment. In addition, when our crews have easy access to our rights-of-way, it enables them to work more safely and efficiently.

Our crews sometimes encounter situations where there is obstruction to the right-of-way. When this is the case, our crews may need to drive through a yard or across the property to find access.

Ideally, fences should not be placed in the rights-of-way. However, if you must have a fence in the right-of-way, please be sure to place an access gate or entrance in that area. The access should have a minimum 8-foot clearance. This will help protect your property and ensure that crews can work safely and efficiently.



Educators: Apply for Grants to Share Your 'Bright Ideas'

Calling all educators! Do you have a bright idea you want to illuminate? Here's your opportunity! Union Power invites K-12 educators to apply for a Bright Ideas grant now through **Sept. 15**.

Educators can apply for up to \$2,000 in grants to fund creative, hands-on classroom projects for all subjects. Teachers may submit multiple grants during one given year and can apply individually or as a team.

As an extra incentive, teachers who apply by the **Aug. 15** "Early Bird" deadline will be entered to win one of five \$100 Visa gift cards.

To apply or learn more, please visit NCBrightIdeas.com.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month:



Want to light up your outdoor space without increasing your energy use? Try outdoor solar lights! They're easy to install and virtually maintenance free. Remember, solar lights work best when the solar cells receive the manufacturer's recommended hours of sunlight.

Source: energy.gov

A hand holding a glowing lightbulb over stacks of coins. The background is blurred, showing a person's hands and a desk with a pen and papers.

New Season, New Ways to Save Energy

As temperatures rise and warmer weather sets in, you'll immediately want to turn your air conditioners on lower temperatures to cool down your homes and beat the sweltering summer heat.

Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) has been identified as having the most significant impact on energy consumption – and in fact, approximately 43% of the energy used in your home goes to heating and cooling. While cutting costs through greater energy efficiency is a year-round feat for many, achieving this goal varies by season. Making smart decisions about your home's HVAC system can have a huge impact on your utility bills – and your comfort.

The first step to achieving greater energy efficiency is by understanding more about home energy use. Union Power offers several ways for you to learn more about your energy use so that you can make informed energy decisions.

You can learn more about our services by visiting the Energy Center on our website at union-power.com to understand the factors that influence your daily energy usage and to track it with online tools. Also, consider using our Pre-Pay program to pay for your electricity in advance; this will allow you to monitor your consumption and manage your energy through text/email alerts.

Here are some additional steps to consider:

- To offset the work your home cooling system has to do to bridge the gap between high outdoor temperatures and low thermostat settings, set your thermostat as high as you can without compromising your comfort level.
- Use a fan, particularly a ceiling fan, in conjunction with your air conditioner. Using a ceiling fan will allow you to increase the thermostat setting approximately four degrees with no reduction in comfort levels. You can set ceiling fans to blow air downward instead of pulling warmer air upward to get the most value (blades should turn counterclockwise). Also, be sure to turn off fans when you leave a room.
- Turn off lights and appliances or even switch to energy-efficient bulbs like LEDs. You can also take it a step further by plugging appliances like televisions, computers, and lamps into power strips. When not in use, turn off the power strip to eliminate phantom load.
- Close blinds, shades, and curtains – especially on windows that pull in direct sunlight and heat from outside.
- Run major appliances like dishwashers, clothes washers, and dryers early in the morning, late evening or overnight, during off-peak hours to avoid circulating heat generated from the appliances during the hottest part of the day.
- Replace dirty air filters routinely to increase the efficiency of your HVAC system and improve airflow/quality.



For more information about Union Power's vegetation management program or tree trimming practices, please call 704-289-3145 and speak with Wil Ortiz (ext. 3323) or Carrie Lorenz-Efird (ext. 3291).

Visit union-power.com for monthly right-of-way clearing updates.

Right-of-Way Clearing

During the next month, you may see our tree-trimming crews from Lewis Tree Service in your neighborhood.

Union County: Union County: Alexis Dr, Beverly Dr, Bonds Grove Church Rd, Brown Ln, Carol Ave, First Ave, Haigler Gin Rd, Kennedy Dr, Lincoln Ct, Love Mill Rd, Morgan Mill Rd, Old Camden Rd, Paula Ln, Piedmont School Rd, Plyler Rd, Reid Rd, Rose Dr, S Providence Rd, Second Ave, Third Ave, Tom Boyd Rd, Tyson Rd, Unionville-Indian Trail Rd, Wampum Dr, Wikiup Dr, Woodhaven Ln, Younts Rd, Zebulon Williams Rd.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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