

Cooperative Review

OCTOBER 2022



Celebrating Membership

October is National Co-op Month

Fall is a busy time, and October is a particularly eventful month with a full swing of school, community, and sports activities. It's also when all cooperatives celebrate National Co-op Month. When I say Union Power Cooperative celebrates Co-op Month, we celebrate you! After all, our co-op wouldn't exist without you—our members.

Our core business purpose is to serve as your electricity provider, but the larger mission of the co-op is to help make our corner of the world a better place. "Concern for community" is one of seven guiding principles that all co-ops share.

Similar to how our wires run through our service territory, our concern for community flows through all of our decisions—because being a co-op means being a responsible partner and good neighbor.

Union Power Cooperative works to help our communities thrive through initiatives led by our employees and a local board comprised of neighbors who live right here in our community. Because we're local, we understand our communities' unique needs and strive to help meet them.

We're proud to support local youth through our Union Power College Scholarships, Basketball Camps, Youth Tour scholarship programs, and other community needs in our five-county service area.

The word "cooperative" is close to "cooperation," meaning people working together towards a common goal—mutually benefitting one another and the larger community. That's the essence of the cooperative spirit. Our employees and member-elected board members are invested in the community where they live and serve.



Focused on YOU.

Electric cooperatives were created to serve their members. Because we're a co-op, we're able to adapt to our community's unique needs. That's the power of co-op membership.

OCTOBER IS NATIONAL CO-OP MONTH

Union Power Cooperative is continuously examining ways to operate more efficiently while providing the highest level of friendly, reliable service you expect and deserve. After all, we're your local co-op. We were built by the members we serve.



Visit union-power.com/energysavingscalculators to check out our various energy savings tools.

83RD ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

JOIN US!

SATURDAY, OCT 8.
LEE PARK CHURCH

2505 Morgan Mill Road - Monroe, NC

7 a.m. REGISTRATION OF MEMBERS
COMPLIMENTARY BREAKFAST
10:30 a.m. BUSINESS MEETING

BRING THE KIDS:

The Kids Festival starts at 9 a.m.
and will include an indoor playground,
bouncy houses, and face painting.



SCAN ME

TRY OUT ELECTRIC LAWN TOOLS:



greenworks



**JAMES RIVER
EQUIPMENT**

**UnionPower
Cooperative**

REMEMBER TO BRING THE
REGISTRATION CARD YOU
RECEIVED IN THE MAIL!

ENERGY FAIR & EXPO:

Our Energy Fair and Expo will begin at 7 a.m.
and include vendors such as Tesla, Ford, Porsche,
Farm Bureau, ElecTel Credit Union, Carolina
Country magazine, Union Services, Union
County Ag Extension Agency, Visit Stanly,
and more.

2,500
IN CASH PRIZES



MUST BE PRESENT TO WIN



COME SEE THE NEW EV:

**F-150
LIGHTNING™**



BLUEGRASS MEETS CUT THE GRASS:

James River Equipment will have a variety of electric lawn
and garden equipment for demonstration. Musical
entertainment begins in the Fellowship Hall at 9 a.m.,
where we'll welcome Terry Baucom's Dukes of Drive.



A Return of Your Investment

Capital Credits Were Distributed in September

Paying your electric bill isn't just payment for service—it's an investment in your cooperative. As a member providing a share of our capital, you're building equity in the co-op, and capital credits are your return of that investment.

Each year, any margins (revenues in excess of expenses) generated by Union Power are proportionally allocated to you as capital credits and are held in an account in your name. Those margins are then reinvested into the cooperative for capital expansion, system improvements, and ongoing operations and maintenance activities.

Once the cooperative has met its financial requirements, and after a period of time, capital credits are returned (paid) to you.

Based on the continued financial strength of the cooperative, the board of directors approved a capital credit retirement of approximately \$3.7 million to be distributed in 2022. This year's capital credit retirement was comprised of 100% of the unretired allocation balance from 2004, as well as 53% of the unretired allocation balance from 2005. This means that if you had service with us during the years of 2004 or 2005, you received a payment in September.

Those members who were eligible for a payment saw a credit on their September electric bill. Former members who moved off of our system should have received a check in the mail.

Capital credits are one of the tangible benefits of being a member of an electric co-op and a big part of what makes us different from other utilities. You can visit union-power.com to learn more about capital credits.

\$ 3.7 Million
Capital Credits distributed
in 2022

See Yourself in Cyber.

October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month

In today's digital world, cyberattacks are, unfortunately, nothing new. Cybercriminals can attack a multitude of levels, from large-scale attacks targeting corporations to smaller phishing attacks aimed at gaining an individual's personal information.

October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month, but good cyber hygiene should be practiced year-round. This year's theme is "See Yourself in Cyber"—because we all have a part to play in cybersecurity. When we hear about massive data breaches, it can feel overwhelming and lead us to think we're powerless as individuals to stop cybercriminals.

The truth is that there are several practical steps we can take to safeguard our devices and data. Here are four easy ways to boost your cyber hygiene:

1. Enable multi-factor authentication.

Also known as two-step verification, multi-factor authentication adds a second step when logging into an account (to prove you're really you), which greatly increases the account's security. This second step could include an extra PIN, answering an extra security question, a code received via email or a security token. Regardless of the type of authentication, this additional step makes it twice as hard for cybercriminals to access your account. Not every account offers multi-factor authentication, but it's becoming increasingly popular and should be utilized when available.

2. Use strong passwords and a password manager.

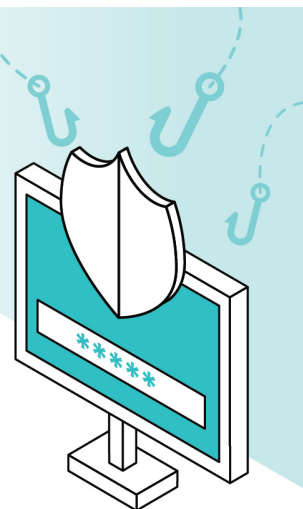
Remember, passwords are the "keys" to your personal home online. Your passwords should always be long, unique, and complex. Create passwords using at least 12 characters, never reuse passwords for multiple accounts and use a combination of upper- and lower-case letters, numbers, and special characters. If you have a lot of accounts, consider using a password manager to store them easily and securely in one place.

3. Update software.

It may seem obvious, but regularly updating software is one of the easiest ways to keep your personal information secure. Most companies provide automatic updates and will send reminders so you can easily install the update. If you're not receiving automatic software updates, set

Improve your cyber hygiene by doing these four things:

1. Enable multi-factor authentication
2. Use strong passwords and a password manager
3. Update software regularly
4. Recognize and report phishing attacks



a reminder to do so quarterly. Be aware that some cybercriminals will send fake updates; these typically appear as a pop-up window when visiting a website. Use good judgment and always think before you click.

4. Recognize and report phishing attacks.

Don't take the bait when cybercriminals go phishing. The signs of a phishing attack can be subtle, so take the extra time to inspect emails thoroughly. Most phishing emails include offers that are too good to be true, an urgent or alarming tone, misspellings, poorly-crafted language, ambiguous greetings, strange requests, or an email address that doesn't match the company it's coming from. Most platforms like Outlook, Gmail, and Mac Mail allow users to report phishing emails. If you suspect a phishing attempt, take an extra minute to report it.

Cybercriminals are here to stay, but when we all take a risk-based approach to our cyber behavior, we're creating a safer internet for all.



Visit staysafeonline.org for additional cybersecurity tips.

Apply Now for a Union Power College Scholarship!



College scholarships can be of tremendous help to parents and students looking for funds to cover the increasing cost of their education after high school. As part of Union Power's commitment to the community, your cooperative is proud to offer 10 \$1,000 scholarships to high school seniors attending a four-year institution or community college in North Carolina.

To qualify, students must reside in the home of a Union Power Cooperative member, be a senior of the current graduating class, and attend a North Carolina accredited college or university. Students can begin applying for a college scholarship now by starting an

application found at union-power.com/collegescholarships. Judging criteria is as follows:

- Need - 50%
- Academic achievement - 25%
- Extracurricular activities - 25%

The deadline is March 1, 2023.



Visit union-power.com/collegescholarships for more information.



POWER BUCKS

Give the gift of power

**LOOKING FOR WAYS TO GIVE THANKS
OR SPREAD A LITTLE HOLIDAY CHEER?**

Give the gift of power by donating Power Bucks; it is sure to brighten someone's day! Power Bucks allow you to purchase kilowatt-hours of electricity for any Union Power member in need.

Call 704-289-3145 to speak with a customer service representative (CSR) who will apply the Power Bucks credit to the member's account of your choice. The member's next bill will show a credit for the amount of Power Bucks purchased.

The minimum purchase is \$25.



**UnionPower
Cooperative**
A member-owned utility



Swimming Pool Heat Pumps

Consider the Heating Cost Added to Your Power Bill

Swimming pools provide a fun place to gather with family and friends or seek refreshment on a hot summer's day. However, your pool may feel less inviting as the winter months draw near and outside temperatures begin to drop. With a pool heater, you can extend your pool-time activities long after summer has ended. But, consider the cost and the impact these purchases will have on your monthly electric bill.

So, which pool heater is best for your pool? Gas heaters and heat pumps are the two most common methods of heating a pool on the market. Both systems work toward the same goal (warm water) but use slightly different operating procedures to get there.

Heat Pumps

Heat pumps use the temperature in the air to warm the water in the pool. These systems often run on electricity or solar power. Due to their reliance on the air's temperature, they are better suited to warmer climates as they use the temperature in the surrounding air to heat the water. Furthermore, if it is placed in a shady corner, it may not be able to draw as much warmth from the surrounding air.

- Heat pump pool heaters cost more than gas pool heaters, but they typically have much lower annual operating costs because of their higher efficiencies. In addition, proper maintenance ensures heat pump pool heaters usually last longer than gas pool heaters. Therefore, you'll save more money in the long run.
- Heat pump heaters will use around 5,000 watts (5 kilowatts per hour per 100,000 BTUs).
- Installation and Maintenance: Proper installation and maintenance of your heat pump pool heater can optimize its efficiency. It's best to have a qualified pool professional install the heater, especially the electric hookup, and perform complicated maintenance or repair tasks. With proper installation and maintenance, heat pump pool heaters can last 10 or more years. Visit energy.gov/energysaver/heat-pump-swimming-pool-heaters for more information.

Gas Heaters

Gas heaters draw water from the pool and push it through a heat exchanger. The warm water is pumped back into the pool to complete the process. These systems use fuel to heat the water and typically run on propane or natural gas. Accessibility to a natural gas line may impact your choice. Units that run on propane tanks are your best option if you cannot connect to underground lines.

Other tips to Consider

- Pool Size: The size of your pool may dictate which system you need. If you have a small pool, you should purchase a unit specially designed for a smaller swimming pool. Also, consider reaching out to a trained professional to perform a proper sizing analysis for your specific pool to determine pool heater size.
- Pool Covers: Invest in a pool cover, which offers energy savings, conserves water, reduces the pool's chemical consumption, and reduces cleaning time by keeping dirt and other debris out of the swimming pool.

If you have questions regarding the impact of pool heaters on your monthly electric bill, contact one of our energy specialists at 704-289-3145.



Visit pentair.com/en-us/education-support/residential/calculators-and-tools to learn more about energy savings for pools.



RAKE IN THE SAVINGS THIS FALL

Get your home prepared for the crisp autumn air.
Contact Union Services and save on your new
heating and cooling system today!

We are your heating, cooling, and electrical experts serving the **Union Power community.**



Scan the QR code or visit
savewithunion.com/specials
to see our special fall offer!



704-283-9047
savewithunion.com

Right-of-Way Clearing

During the next month, you may see our tree-trimming crews in your neighborhood: Vendors: ABC Professional Tree Services, Asplundh Tree Expert Co., Lewis Tree Service, Lucas Tree Experts, and Xylem Inc.

Stanly County: Beulah Ln, Biles Rd, Canton Rd, Clover Ln, Herb Farm Cir, Millingport Rd, Mini Airport Rd

Union County: Alton Woods Rd, Antioch Church Rd, Arant Rd, Armfield Mill Rd, Autumn Dr, Back Rd, Bud Plyler Rd, Cane Creek Rd, Carl Belk Rd, Clear Creek Dr, Courtney Store Rd, Cox Rd, Daniel Dr, Dudley Rd, Dusty Hollow Rd, E Sandy Ridge Rd, Earl Griffin Rd, Eden Hollow Ln, Ellis Belk Rd, Emily Ln, Eubanks Rd, Four Wood Dr, Fowler Rd, George Guin, Rd, Goldmine Rd, Greywood Ln, Gus Eubanks Rd, H B Starnes Rd, Heath Davis Rd, Hice St, Hillside Dr, Hilton Meadow Dr, Huntington Dr, Jack Davis Rd, Jug Broome Rd, Kimberly Dr, Lake Dr, Lake Monroe Dr, Landsford Rd, Laney Rogers Rd, Lells St, Macedonia Church Rd, Marvin Watkins Rd, Medlin Rd, N Charlotte Ave, North Lake Dr, Oak Dr, Oak Forest Circle, Oakwood Dr, Pageland Hwy, Patton Ave, Pine Oaks Dr, Plainview Dr, Plyler Mill Rd, Poplin Rd, Ranch Dr, Rape Rd, Red Fox Run Rd, Richmond Ln, Roanoke Church Rd, Rock Hill Church Rd, Rollins Rd, S Potter Rd, S Rocky River Rd, Sara Hinson Rd, Secrest Hill Dr, Secrest Shortcut Rd, Seymour St, Stack Rd, Starnes Cemetery Rd, Three Knots Rd, Three Wood Dr, Tom Greene Rd, Tom Starnes Rd, Trinity Church Rd, Union Rd, W Sandy Ridge Rd, Walden Ln, Wallace Rd, Walters Mill



Rd, Walters Rd, Whispering Hollow Rd, Wolf Pond Rd, Wood Duck Point Rd



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.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Daylight around a window frame and a rattle from a window means it's time to seal these leaks with caulk or weather-stripping. Visit energy.gov/energysaver to learn how and where to seal air leaks.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

The Cooperative Review newsletter is published monthly for the members and friends of Union Power Cooperative.

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