

Cooperative Review

JANUARY 2024



Middle Schoolers: Are you ready to shoot some hoops this summer?

Two North Carolina universities are hosting the Touchstone Energy Sports Camps for rising sixth or seventh-graders. One young boy will be selected to attend the Carolina Basketball School at UNC-Chapel Hill, and one young girl will be chosen to attend the Wolfpack Women's Basketball Camp at NC State in Raleigh.

Two chosen students will work closely with college coaches to develop fundamental skills and techniques that will help them excel on and off the court, build relationships with other students, players, and experience college life at a young age!

Applicants will be evaluated based on their academics, extracurricular activities, and two short essay submissions.



Students interested in applying can visit union-power.com/sportscampscholarships until March 31.





Empowering Youth Through Education

As a commitment, Union Power is proud to award 13 Bright Ideas grants to teachers from the following counties: Union, Stanly, Mecklenburg, and Cabarrus. The grants will impact nearly 5,400 students and benefit all subjects and grade levels.

The Bright Ideas Grant program, sponsored by North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation (NCEMC), has dedicated its interest to improve education in North Carolina classrooms since 1994. Since then, the program has expanded to more than two decades encouraging teachers to share their Bright Ideas to help students to further their education.

Communications/Public Relations Specialist Emily Aldridge says, "Teachers are vital in motivating and inspiring our youth to become future leaders. The Bright Ideas Grant program enhances education and creates a dynamic learning environment. The program strengthens our communities and ensures that education meets the needs of students in a changing world."

Applications for the Bright Ideas grants will be available for submission on April 1, 2024. Congratulations to the 2023/2024 winners.



Hickory Ridge Elementary



West Cabarrus High



Union Academy Middle



Bethel Elementary

2023-2024 Bright Ideas Winners

Teacher Name	School	County	Grant Name	Awarded
Vanessa Holt	Bethel Elementary	Cabarrus	Ozobot Explorers: Elementary STEM Adventures	\$2,000
Heather Shulman	Hickory Ridge Elementary	Cabarrus	Growing Readers	\$1,460
Lindsey Kiral	Hickory Ridge Middle	Cabarrus	Garden of Origins Art Installation	\$1,579
Andrea Mangum	Northwest Cabarrus High	Cabarrus	School-Based Enterprise (Training, Equipment & Certification)	\$1,997
Lara Cabaniss	Northwest Cabarrus STEM Middle	Cabarrus	Micro:Bits Mania	\$630
Kimberly Martin	Royal Oaks School of the Arts	Cabarrus	Hands of Gratitude	\$2,000
Christina Morgan	West Cabarrus High	Cabarrus	Club for Aspiring Engineers	\$1,871
Trudy Mertz	West Cabarrus High	Cabarrus	Workplace Enterprise	\$337
Mary Barbee	West Stanly Middle	Stanly	"Socially Awkward"	\$1,870
Stefanie Carnathan	Cuthbertson High	Union	Baking a Difference	\$1,957
Adam Haas	Rocky River Elementary	Union	Exploring Amazing STEM Careers	\$2,000
Jeff Starnes	Union Academy Middle	Union	Zest in the Nest with LabQuest	\$1,932
Amanda Morris	Weddington Middle	Union	Amazing Mathematical RACE	\$1,285



West Stanly Middle



Cuthbertson High

Understanding Your Home's Heating System

As we begin the new year, the warmth of our home is essential in fighting the winter chill. But have you ever wondered what type of heating system keeps you cozy? Each heating system will keep you warm, whether it's a gas, electric, or oil furnace, an electric heat pump, or a dual-fuel system. As your electric provider, we aim to provide you with all the tools to identify what system you have in your home and how to operate your unit for the highest efficiency in the long run.

What type of heating system do you have?

- If your thermostat has an emergency/auxiliary heat option, you most likely have a heat pump as your primary heating source, with an electric or gas supplemental heat source.
- If your thermostat does not have an emergency/auxiliary heat selection, you have a gas, oil, or electric furnace as your primary heating source for your home.

If you determine your primary heat source is a heat pump, adjust your thermostat to heat mode in two-degree increments or less. Raising the thermostat more than two degrees above the room's temperature will activate the emergency heat. The emergency heat should only run when the heat pump goes into a defrost cycle when the outside temperature drops below 32 degrees. Once the heat pump cycles to defrost, it will rely solely on the emergency/auxiliary heat to maintain the home's thermostat setting. If you notice your emergency/auxiliary heat is operating and the outside temperature does not justify it, verify your thermostat setting. If your settings are correct, then contact a professional HVAC company to inspect your unit.



If you are still wondering what type of heating system you have, call 704-289-3145 and speak with one of our Energy Specialists.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

During winter months, ensure your home is well sealed to reduce the need for excessive heating. Seal air leaks around your home and add insulation where needed to save up to 10% on annual energy bills. Install weather stripping on exterior doors and apply caulk around windows. Check attic insulation levels and hire a qualified contractor if additional insulation is required.

Beginner's Guide to the Electric Grid

Electricity plays an essential role in our lives. It powers our homes, businesses, hospitals, and schools. If the power goes out, even briefly, our lives can be disrupted. The electric grid, known as the most complex machine in the world, delivers electricity to your home.

It is a network of power lines, transformers, substations, and other infrastructure that spans the entire country, but it's not just a singular system. It's divided into three major interconnected grids—the Eastern Interconnection, the Western Interconnection, and the Electric Reliability Council of Texas. These grids operate independently but are linked to transfer electricity between regions when backup is needed. Within the three major interconnected grids are the Independent System Operators (ISOs) and Regional Transmission Organizations (RTOs) which manage the high-voltage transmission grid in the U.S.

Electricity Begins at Power Plants

Power plants can be thought of as factories that make electricity using various energy sources, like natural gas, solar, wind, and nuclear energy. Across the U.S., more than 11,000 power plants deliver electricity to the grid by high-voltage transmission lines that act like highways transporting power over long distances.

“The electric grid—our nation’s most complex machine—is one of our nation’s greatest achievements”.

Substations are like pit stops along the highway, where the voltage of electricity is adjusted. They are crucial in managing power flow and ensuring electricity is safe for homes and businesses.

Once the electricity is reduced to the proper voltage, it travels through distribution power lines, like the ones you see on the side of the road. Distribution lines carry electricity from substations to homes, schools, and businesses. Distribution transformers, which look like metal buckets on the top of power poles or large green boxes on the ground, reduce voltage levels to be suitable for household appliances and electronic devices. After traveling through transformers, electricity reaches your home to power your everyday life.

From creation to use, electricity travels great distances to be available at the flip of a switch. That makes the electric grid our nation’s most complex machine—and one of our nation’s greatest achievements. We’re proud to be your local, trusted energy provider.



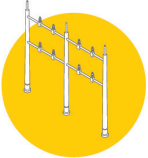
step 1
Generation
Electricity is generated from various sources.



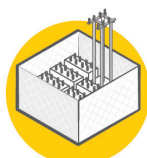
step 2
Step-Up Transformer
Voltage is increased to push the electricity over long distances.



step 3
Transmission Power Lines
Lines carry electricity over long distances.



step 4
Transmission Substation
Voltage is lowered so electricity can travel across the local system.



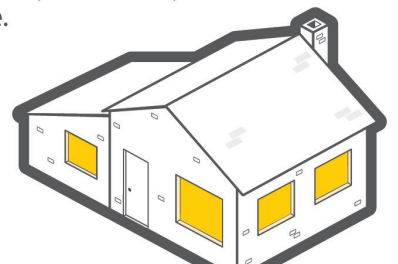
step 5
Distribution Substation
Voltage is lowered further for safe distribution.



step 6
Distribution Power Lines
Electricity travels across these lines in your community.



step 7
Final Stop
A transformer reduces voltage a final time, and electricity is sent to your home.



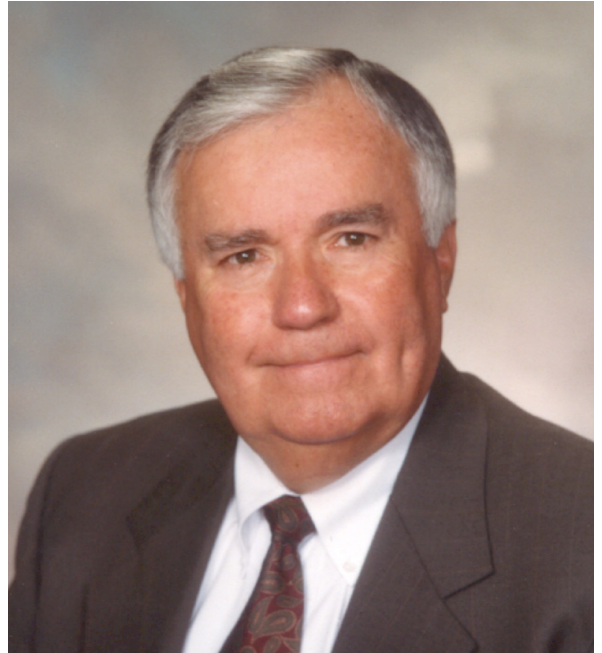
1970s: Reshaping the Future

During the 1970s, the Cooperative grew annually between five and seven percent with a membership of more than 17,000 members. With this growth, we continued to upgrade our system by increasing capacity in the Marvin-Weddington area of Union County and the north and northwest areas of Union County. Construction of a Breaker Station in southern Union County was well underway, as were plans for transmission lines to connect it to our existing substations.

Members were introduced to a new meter reading method using the stub portion of their bill instead of a meter card. The improvement allowed the cooperative to eliminate two mailings: the mailing of meter reading cards and the return postage. The new program estimated a savings of \$30,000 annually.

After 36 years of service, General Manager R. E. Hayworth retired from Union Electric Membership Corporation (UEMC) on June 30, 1978. He was a believer in the Rural Electrification Program and gave of himself untiringly to see that the Cooperative was operated in such a manner as to render service at the lowest cost possible to the member. Philip L. Wally was appointed by the Board of Directors as the new General Manager and began his career on July 1, 1978.

One of the first actions during his tenure was opening a district office to the members. In October 1978, the Board of Directors approved full-service operation at the Oakboro District Office on E. Seventh Street and North



Philip L. Wally
General Manager 1978 - 2002

Dorsett Street. The facility was built in 1965 and placed into full-service operation in January 1979. This operation would prove to be a valuable service to our members living in Stanly and Rowan counties.





Maximize Your Budget for the New Year

Do you want to take a more active role in your savings for the New Year? If so, Levelized Billing is one option to consider to help you kick off the new year right!

Levelized Billing

Levelized Billing is based on a rolling, 12-month average that prevents drastic changes in your bill, regardless of how hot or cold it is. Each month, the amount will increase or decrease slightly as consumption changes. The monthly payment amount is typically a few dollars.

If you want to see how levelized billing could help you, call and speak with a Customer Service Representative.



For more information, visit union-power.com/billingoptions or speak to one of our Customer Service Representatives (CSR) at 704-289-3145.



Right-of-Way Clearing

During the next month, you may see our tree-trimming crews in your neighborhood: Vendors: Xylem Inc. and Lewis Tree Service.

Stanly County: Love Mill Rd, Ralph Ln, Tite Rd, Vernon Ln, Yow Rd

Union County: Dwight Starnes Rd, Lancaster Hwy, McWhorter Rd, Nesbit Rd, Old Highway Rd, OS Drive, Rollingwood Ln, S Potter Rd

For more information about Union Power's vegetation management program or tree pruning practices, please call Wil Ortiz at 704-289-3145 (ext. 3323) or Carrie Lorenz-Efird (ext. 3291). Also, visit union-power.com/vegetation-management/crew-locations for monthly right-of-way clearing updates and information on our programs.



As a Union Power Cooperative member, you agree to: Comply with all aspects of the service agreement and agree to be bound by the cooperative's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws; and furnish, without cost to the cooperative, all necessary distribution easements, and rights-of-way.

UnionPower
Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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

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