

# Cooperative Review

MARCH 2024



## Beat the Buzzer: Last Shot to Score a Scholarship

**U**nion Power is now accepting applications from rising sixth- and seventh-graders to attend basketball camp at two North Carolina universities this summer. Union Power will select one girl to attend the Wolfpack Women's Basketball camp at NC State in Raleigh from June 16-19. The chosen boy will attend the Carolina Basketball School at the UNC-Chapel Hill from June 22-26.

The two chosen students selected for the scholarships will be covered with overnight camp expenses, experience life on a college campus, and practice drills with NCAA coaches and athletes. Beyond the physical benefits of playing sports, campers will gain skills that will develop their character and help them excel on and off the court, like working as a team and connecting with new friends.

Middle school students from Union Power's five-county territory can apply to attend the Touchstone Energy's basketball camp at [union-power.com/sportscampscholarships](https://union-power.com/sportscampscholarships) by March 31. All applicants will be judged by an outside committee based on their academics, extracurricular activities, and two short essays. Also, the applicant must have a parent or guardian's signature on the application. The two students selected for the scholarship are only responsible for transportation to and from camp.



BEAT THE BUZZER

DEADLINE IS MARCH 31ST

Touchstone Energy Sports Camp Scholarships

UnionPower Cooperative

# Power Lines and Petunias

As we embrace the beautiful weather of spring, it's the perfect time for planting around your yard. Union Power is here to guide you on planting around our power lines and equipment. Planting and putting fences or other obstructions around utility equipment can be dangerous for you and utility workers.

- **Right-of-Way Planting:** When planting trees near power lines, choose low-growing species that won't exceed 20 feet at maturity. Planting them at the edge of the right-of-way, rather than directly underneath the power lines, can become a safety concern. Union Power will cut down or prune the trees according to our planting guidelines if the trees are placed within the right-of-way area. Refer to the Planting Guidelines & Clearances at [union-power.com/vegetation-management](https://union-power.com/vegetation-management).
- **Transformer Zone Safety:** If you plan on planting or putting obstruction around the transformer zones, please designate 10 feet away from the transformer or look at the sticker outside the transformer for

more information regarding the appropriate distance requirements. When considering planting around underground transformers, keep Black-Eyed Susan, Daylilies, and Shasta Daisies in mind. These are beautiful plants that are non-woody and low-growing species. Consider planting them at least 5 feet away from the unit so as not to impede access.

- **Why It Matters:** Understanding where and how to plant near power lines and equipment is crucial for your safety and the efficiency of our cooperative's operations. Proper planting ensures uninterrupted power supply and reduces the risk of outages and accidents.



For planting guidelines and more information, visit [union-power.com/vegetation-management](https://union-power.com/vegetation-management) or contact Wil Ortiz at 704-289-3145 (ext. 3323).





# Celebrating Agriculture Through Reliable Power

Eighty-five years ago, farmers and rural communities came together to form some of the first electric cooperatives across the state and the nation to serve power to rural areas. They set the poles, strung the lines, and went door-to-door, asking people in their communities to join them in establishing a local, member-owned business that could transform their community and change lives.

Since then, we have come a long way, but we've remained true to our roots and committed to supporting, investing in, and strengthening our local communities. Electricity continues to hold great promise for agriculture—North Carolina's top industry—and opens the door to new opportunities across numerous sectors as we work to embrace innovation and implement new technologies.

In recognition of agriculture's essential role in our everyday lives, National Ag Day will celebrate its 51st anniversary on March 19. Ag Day is a day when producers, agricultural associations, corporations, universities, government agencies, and countless others across America gather to recognize and celebrate the abundance provided by agriculture. We are thankful every day for the contributions farmers have made to our communities.

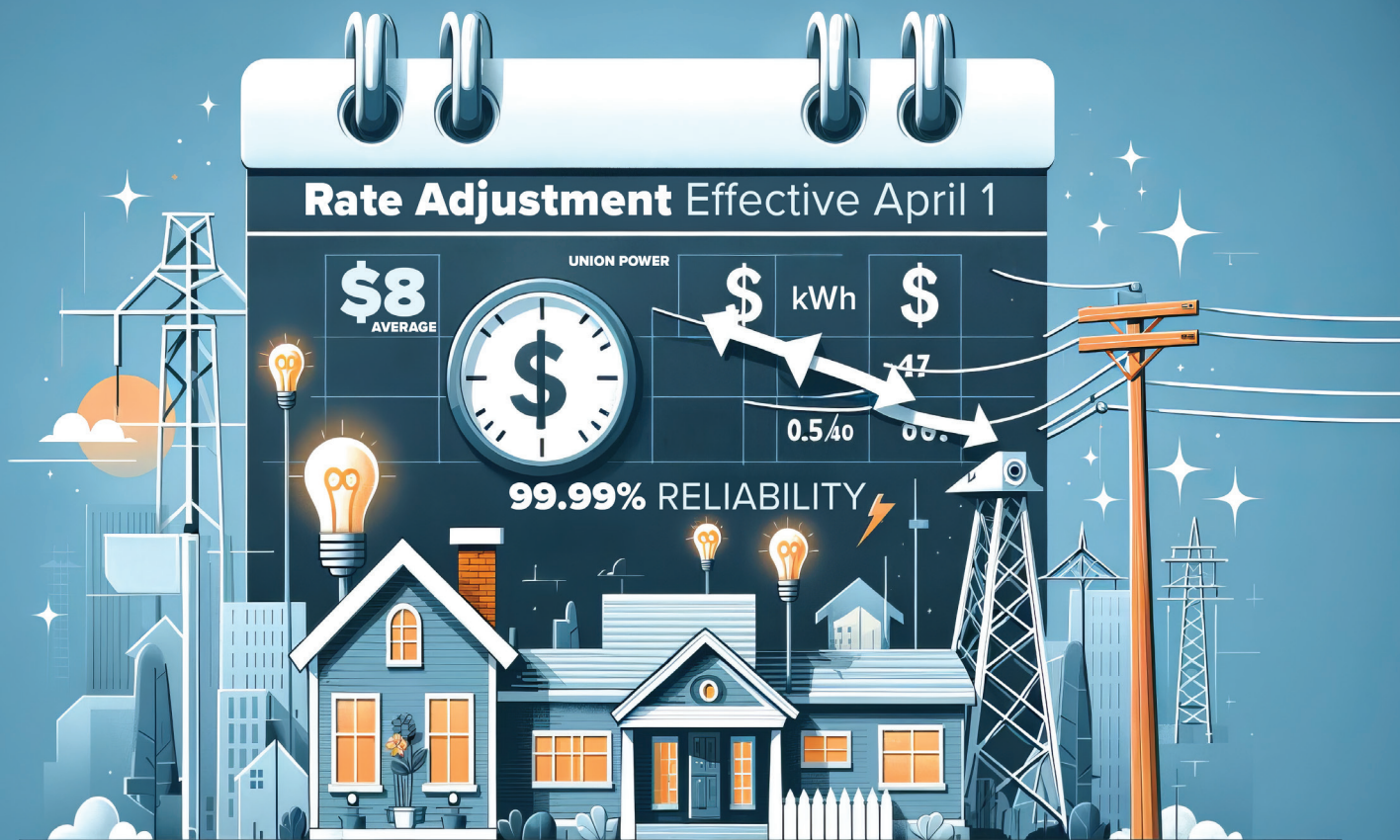
Agriculture is the backbone of our country and is North Carolina's leading industry. Our livelihood greatly depends on the crops provided by American farmers. We salute and honor the men and women who contribute daily to our national prosperity. Thanks to the efficiency of our farmers and ranchers, our rural communities are stronger and more resilient.

We are proud to support farmers' operational needs through safe, reliable, and affordable power. As North Carolina's agricultural and energy industries grow, we strive to develop efficiencies that benefit all.

Thank you again to our farmers, agricultural members, and partners for the vital ways you support our daily lives.







## Rate Changes to be Implemented April 2024

Effective April 1, 2024, Union Power Cooperative will implement our first rate adjustment in five years, and only our second in nine years.

During the business portion of the 84th Annual Meeting last October and in last month's issue of the Co-op Review, we made members aware of the need to adjust rates. This rate adjustment is to ensure the continued financial strength and security of your cooperative and allows us the ability to continue to provide reliable electric service.

**Why the Adjustment?** The rate adjustment is primarily driven by substantial increases in the costs associated with providing service to our members. This sharp rise in cost extends from the price of wholesale power to that of raw materials, construction, and maintenance. These increases have only been pronounced by inflationary pressures throughout the industry.

**How was the Rate Adjustment Determined?** A Cost-of-Service Study was conducted in coordination with an independent consulting firm, involving an in-depth analysis of the costs associated with providing service. The results of the study highlighted that our existing rates are insufficient to keep pace with rising costs. Ultimately, rates were adopted that balance the needs of the Cooperative against the impact on our members.

**What's the Impact of the Rate Adjustment?** The impact to a majority of our members—those served under our General Service Rate—is anticipated to be less than \$8 per month, on average. To put this into perspective, this is about the cost of a single combo meal from a fast-food restaurant. While all rates will be adjusted, the actual impact to any one member is highly variable.

**Other Important Changes:** There are a number of additional rate schedule and program changes, highlighted below:

**All-Electric Rates:** The Cooperative will no longer offer All-Electric rates. If you are currently served by one of the All-Electric rate schedules, you will be placed on the equivalent General Service rate, effective April 1.

**Time-of-Day Peak Periods:** If you are served by one of the Cooperative's Time-of-Day rate schedules, notice that the definition of Peak Periods no longer excludes weekends and holidays, effective April 1.

**Lighting Service:** Significant modifications to the Lighting Service rate schedule and to the underlying administration of the lighting program are being implemented, effective April 1.



General Service Rate

Applicable to farms, residences, small businesses, schools, churches, and public buildings supplied through one meter.

Basic Facilities Charges

Single-Phase (≤400 amps) .....\$ 35.00 per month  
Single-Phase (> 400 amps or 3-phase res.) \$ 55.00 per month

Energy Charges

Summer (bills rendered Jun-Oct)

All kWh .....\$ 0.105776 per kWh

Winter (bills rendered Nov-May)

First 1,000 kWh .....\$ 0.105776 per kWh  
Over 1,000 kWh .....\$ 0.100776 per kWh

Prepaid Service Rate

Applicable only to those who would otherwise be served by the General Service Rate.

Basic Facilities Charge .....\$ 1.26 per day  
Energy Charge.....\$ 0.105122 per kWh

Estimated Bill Comparison

As previously stated, the impact to a majority of our members—those served under our **General Service Rate**—is anticipated to be less than \$8 per month, on average. See estimated monthly bill comparison below.

General Service Rate Estimated Monthly Bill Comparison			
System Monthly Average Usage		Current Rate	April 1 Rate
Summer Avg (Jun-Oct)	1,417 kWh	\$ 176.28	\$ 184.88
Winter Avg (Nov-May)	974 kWh	\$ 130.70	\$ 138.03
Annual Avg	1,159 kWh	\$ 149.54	\$ 157.40

- All rates are subject to Sales Tax, Wholesale Power Cost Adjustment (WPCA), and any applicable riders.
- All estimates presented are based on system average usage and actual outcomes may vary greatly on an individual basis.
- Union Power Cooperative’s full Electric Rate Schedules will be available on April 1 at [union-power.com/rates](http://union-power.com/rates).
- Contact customer service at 704-289-3145 if you have any questions.

Commercial Service Rate

Applicable to members located on or near three-phase lines and receiving three-phase service.

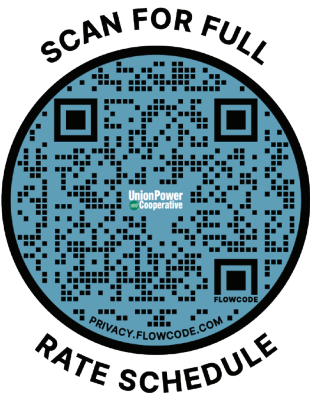
Basic Facilities Charge .....\$ 75.00 per month

Demand Charges

First 25 kW. ....\$ 0.00 per kW  
Over 25 kW .....\$ 8.90 per kW

Energy Charges

First 3,000 kWh .....\$ 0.110002 per kWh  
Next 7,000 kWh .....\$ 0.084252 per kWh  
Over 10,000 kWh.....\$ 0.057652 per kWh



Available online no later than April 1, 2024.

Fast-Food Combo Meal

\$7 - \$10

Basic Drive-Through Car Wash

\$8 - \$10

Large Specialty Coffee Drink

\$6 - \$8

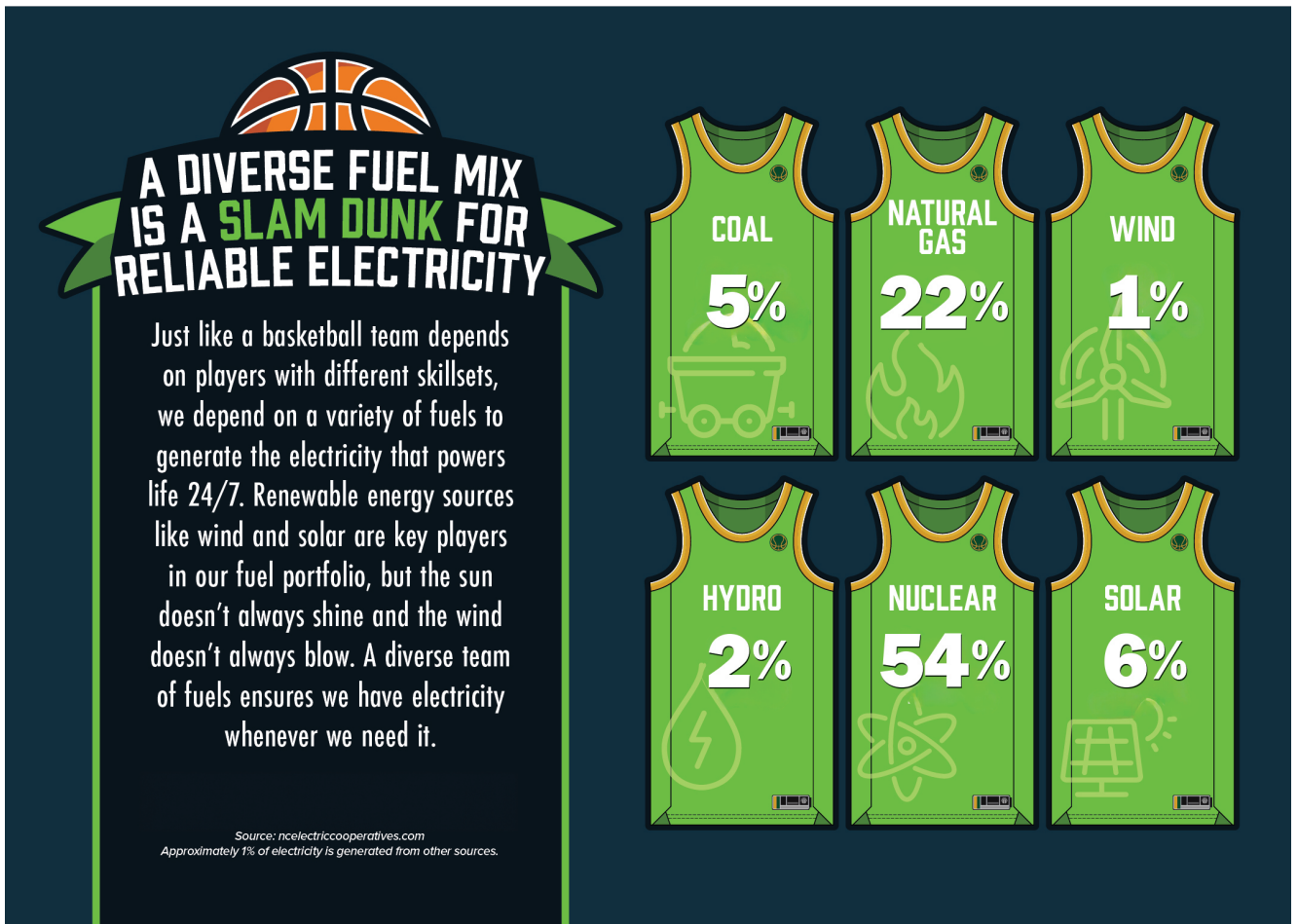
Avg. Streaming Subscription

\$8 - \$16



# MARCH 10

Don't forget to **SPRING FORWARD**





# Pruning for Reliability

Trees are a great source of shade and coolness for almost all seasons, but they can become a problem when they grow over or near power lines. As important as it is to Union Power and its members, we understand that our members depend on us to deliver reliable power. As trees serve many roles in benefiting the environment, we have strived to balance maintaining trees through our vegetation management crew and ensuring reliable electricity. You might not realize it, but there are several benefits to regular tree pruning.

## Reliability

Keeping power lines clear of overgrown vegetation improves service reliability. Union Power works hard to ensure that rights-of-way are properly cleared of trees and limbs that could present a possible safety or power reliability risk. This is why you sometimes see our vegetation management crew and vendors prune trees near power lines in the field. Our pruning crews have been trained and certified based on the latest industry standards.

## Safety

Working near power lines can be very dangerous, and we care about your safety and our lineworkers. For example, if a tree touches a power line and is in reaching distance, it can become dangerous for anyone. Electricity can arc or jump from a power line to a nearby conductor, such as a tree.

Any tree or branch that falls on a power line can be dangerous. A proactive approach reduces the likelihood of tree branches falling on power lines during severe storms, making it less complicated and hazardous for lineworkers to restore power.

## Accountability

When it comes to vegetation management, there are ways you can help, too. When planting new trees, make sure they're planted a safe distance from overhead power lines. You can plant small trees less than 20 feet tall at maturity and plant shrubs adjacent to power lines, but the maximum height matures at 15 feet or less. Medium-height trees, 25-40 feet in height/spread, need to be at least 30 feet away from power lines. Large trees, over 40 feet in height/spread, should be at least 50 feet away from



power lines. You can also practice safe planting near pad-mounted transformers. When planting near a pad-mount transformer, make sure there is appropriate clearance of at least 10 feet from the transformer door and four feet from the sides for access to Union Power equipment, which is necessary at all times. Remember, before you begin any project that requires digging, call 811 to find out what is below you.

We have deep roots in our community and love our beautiful surroundings. We strive to reduce tree impacts for best-in-class reliability of service.



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](https://union-power.com/vegetation-management/crew-locations) for monthly right-of-way clearing updates and information on our programs.

# Right-of-Way Clearing

During the next month, you may see our tree-trimming crews in your neighborhood: Lewis Tree Service, Asplundh Tree Expert Co., Burford's Tree, and Xylem Tree Experts.

**Cabarrus County:** Alish Trl, Barnhardt Rd, Bilverlor Ct, Bost Cut Off Rd, Boston St, Cold Springs Rd, Craven Ln, Drake Rd, E Brief Rd, E Old Dutch Rd, Edgefield Rd, Hahn Blvd, Hopewell Church Rd, Kiser Rd, Libby Ln, Malibu Rd, Miami Church Rd, Mt Pleasant Rd S, Oberhaus St, Oldenburg Dr, Ray Linker Rd, Rhineland Ct, Tabitha Ln, Waldeck Ct, Westerholt Ct, Whitley Rd

**Mecklenburg County:** Apple Creek Dr, Atchinson Dr, Beaver Dam Ln, Boxcar Ct, Chattanooga Ln, Club Car Ct, Farm Oak Ln, Golden Spike Dr, Grand Junction Rd, Iron Horse Ct, Kool Springs Dr, Lawyers Rd, Lawyers Station Dr, Mountain Apple Dr, Pine Lake Ln, Roundhouse Cir, Santa Fe Ln, Topeka Dr, Tressel Ln, Truelight Church Rd, Wooden Rail Ln

**Stanly County:** Bear Creek Church Rd, Brooks Rd, Buster Rd, Creekwood Rd, Drye-Hill Rd, Earl Rd, Ellen Rd, Ellis Spring Ct, Esther Rd, Glory Hills Dr, Harwood Rd, Hillcrest Rd, Karen Rd, Lowder Reunion Rd, Millingport Rd, NC Hwy 200, NC Hwy 73, Old Concord Rd, Pauls Crossing Rd, Poplin Rd, Rock Hole Rd, Rogers Rd, Rushing Rd, Taren Rd, Vick Rd, Watson Rd

**Union County:** Airport Rd, Biggers Cemetery Rd, Brantley Rd, Carriker Williams Rd, Carter Rd, Clarence Secrest Rd, E Brief Rd, Hwy 205, Little Rd, Lucy Shortcut Rd, Martin Tucker Rd, New Hope Church Rd, New Salem Rd, Old Ferry Rd, Old Goldmine Rd, Olive Branch Rd, Polk Mountain Dr, Sikes Mill



Rd, Sugar and Wine Rd, Weddington Rd, Wesley Woods Rd, Williamston Dr, Willoughby Rd

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.



## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Maintain your clothes dryer's efficiency and safety with these quick tips:

- 1) Clean the lint filter after every load to boost air circulation;
- 2) Regularly vacuum the lint trap opening;
- 3) If you use dryer sheets, remove residue from the filter with hot water and a brush to prevent film buildup.

**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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**Exec. Vice President & General Manager**

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