



Roanoke Electric **FLASHES**

Why right-of-way management helps keep your lights on

Did you know something as simple as a tree limb can cause an outage to your home? With transmission and distribution lines that go across over 2,000 miles of rural landscapes, vegetation management on rights-of-way (ROWs) poses one of the biggest challenges for Roanoke Electric Cooperative. But it's not just the amount of land that has to be managed that underscores its importance: your service reliability and employee safety are also at stake.

Why is vegetation management important to my service?

We take pride in knowing that each time you flip a switch or turn a knob, you have a reliable source of power.

Over the years, however, trees have been a major contributing factor in power outages across our system, especially during major storms. That's why the cooperative has developed a comprehensive vegetation management plan, which allows us to control the growth of trees and other vegetation around our distribution lines and ROWs.

What does Roanoke's vegetation management plan consist of?

As part of its management plan, the co-op sets a goal to perform right-of-way maintenance on 15-20% of its circuits each year.

The cooperative uses a combination of spraying and trimming to manage its ROWs. The cooperative has also employed contractors to perform a ground-to-sky trim to



avoid conflicts with the power line. To keep our ROWs and substations free of undesired weeds and plants that may hinder the operational efficiency of the system, cooperative crews also treat certain areas with a chemical spray. This is a cost-effective way to primarily target trees and woody underbrush with chemicals that are not harmful to humans or animals.

Will I be notified of ROW maintenance in my neighborhood?

Yes. Your cooperative will notify you via a bill insert when ROW maintenance is being performed in your area.

Where should I plant trees to avoid future problems?

If you're a tree planter, be sure to follow the guidelines here to ensure that you can beautify your yard without creating a hazard to nearby powerlines.

For more details about your cooperative's ROW maintenance plan, visit roanokeelectric.com/ROW.

QUESTIONS?

Submit your questions to our blog and we'll answer you directly!
Simply visit roanokeelectric.com/response today.

Under the bright lights of a baseball diamond, commitment to community shines

By day, John Turner serves as an auto mechanic for Roanoke Electric. But it's the role he serves off the clock that holds special meaning in this community.

For more than two decades, he's volunteered as coach for the Northampton County High School baseball team and recreational league. "It's not only my passion, but my way of doing my part to give back to my community," he said. The Northampton County native played baseball while in high school and his love

Knowing that I've made such a difference in some young person's life through my passion is priceless.



for the game has resulted into a 22-year coaching career.

As a co-op employee, Turner said he takes pride in knowing that he and his employer share the same values. "Working for an electric cooperative like Roanoke not only means that I carry our principle of having concern for community with me throughout my role as auto mechanic, but I

have the pleasure of putting that principle into action even when I'm off the clock."

What Turner said he finds most rewarding is the opportunity to see students obtain full scholarships to further their education. "Knowing that I've made such a difference in some young person's life through my passion is priceless."

Interested in solar?

Roanoke Electric Cooperative wants to make sure that you have reliable, affordable power to take you through your day, no matter the source! That's why member-owners have access to a community-shared solar farm if they'd like to responsibly incorporate solar power as an energy source with Community Solar.

Member-owners can purchase the energy output from solar panels. Your cooperative has already built the facility at our headquarter office and will cover all insurance and maintenance costs. The solar energy produced by the panels will be credited to you on your monthly electric bill.

Interested in solar energy? Simply visit roanokeelectric.com/CommunitySolar.



There's an energy savings party happening! Simply BYOT

Wi-fi enabled thermostats, also called smart thermostats, are finding their way into many of the homes of our member-owners. These thermostats offer a convenient way for member-owners to remotely control their heating and air conditioning system via a mobile device.

If you're one of the hundreds of member-owners with an internet-connected thermostat, you could be eligible to earn a \$75 rebate upfront and a \$4 bill credit per month by participating in an upcoming Bring Your Own Thermostat (BYOT) program being developed.

Devices that could qualify for the future program include Ecobee, Honeywell and Nest thermostats. Member-owners currently have the opportunity to purchase an Ecobee3 thermostat at 60-80 per-

cent off the retail rate of \$250.

For member-owners only, the thermostats will cost:

- \$50 (plus tax) for Electric Heating and AC Users
- \$100 (plus tax) for AC Users Only

Enrolling in the program would allow Roanoke Electric Cooperative to send a signal to your thermostat to make brief, limited adjustments at times when energy demand is especially high and therefore most expensive.

When the program launches, calling on these thermostats will reduce demand during peak times and increase service reliability. You will always have control of your thermostat and can change the settings at any time. Call our Care Center at 252-209-2236 for details.



Upgrade to \$ave generates steady flow of savings

Are the windows and ducts in your home properly sealed? Do you have adequate insulation in your attic? Is your heat pump energy efficient?

Hundreds of member-owners can now answer "yes" to these questions, thanks to the Roanoke Electric Co-op's Upgrade to \$ave program.

"I had no idea that I had so much energy escaping through my attic," said Julie Parker of Ahoskie. "Since participating in this program, I have seen a difference in my electric bill."

In addition to savings, the program also offers comfort and peace of mind. "We didn't stay warm, yet we were working just to pay the utility bill," said Georgia B. Everett of Windsor. "Since par-

ticipating in the program, we have not lived like this in a long time. I just appreciate Roanoke Electric; they have made us happy."

With Upgrade to \$ave, member-owners can make energy efficiency upgrades to their homes with no upfront cost to them. The co-op will make investments in these upgrades, regardless of the participant's credit score or financial status.

In turn, participants agree to pay a voluntary tariff on their electric bill. The tariff shares the energy efficiency savings with the cooperative at a level that assures immediate savings for our participants and full cost recovery for our cooperative. Your cooperative ensures that your monthly savings



Georgia B. Everett



Julie Parker

are always higher than your monthly tariff so that your bill is reduced.

If you would like to join these member-owners in participating in this program, be sure to visit roanokeelectric.com/UpgradeToSave.

Efficiency tips for outdoor shops and barns

There are many benefits to having an energy-efficient outdoor shop or barn. Aside from saving energy, an efficient outdoor building can keep the environment around your structure healthy and safe; save money on your water bill; keep your animals happier and healthier; and save you from costly structural repairs.

Whether you are looking to build a new structure, or make changes to an existing structure, there are many ways you can make your outdoor shop or barn more energy efficient.

Are you planning to build a new structure on your property? Follow these tips to achieve energy efficiency:

- Location matters. If possible, carefully consider where you build your shop or barn. Consider drainage, sun exposure and how the building may affect your neighbors.
- Start with a sustainable design plan. A sustainable design plan, according to the U.S. General Services Administration (gsa.gov/portal/content/104462), includes the ability to use environmentally preferable products; protect and conserve water; enhance indoor environmental quality; and optimize operational and maintenance practices.
- If you are hiring a contractor to help build your structure, make sure you look for companies who specialize in “green” buildings and energy efficient practices.



- Choose efficient building methods. Pole barns offer reliable shelter without costly excavation, concrete foundations or general site disruption.

Follow these tips to make energy efficient upgrades to an existing structure:

- Replace indoor lighting with energy efficient LED bulbs.
- Ensure your existing structure has adequate insulation levels.
- Choose outdoor lighting designed to be energy efficient, and install motion detectors to reduce energy consumption when not in use.
- Plant trees around your metal shed or barn. In colder climates, trees act as a windbreak, and in warmer climates, trees have a natural cooling effect that can reduce temperatures in your metal building 3 to 6 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Consider adding a ceiling fan to circulate air. Typically, there is a 2-degree Fahrenheit temperature increase for every 1-foot increase in ceiling height. A ceiling fan can help keep warm air close to the ground in the winter, and circulate fresher, cooler air in the summer. Not only will this help with energy costs, it will also help keep the air in the building from becoming hot and stagnant, which will keep harmful bacteria from building and will keep insects at bay.

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To learn more about how to make your outdoor shop or barn more energy efficient, contact the energy experts at Roanoke Electric Cooperative.