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Our Office Will be Closed

**November 11th
in Honor of Veteran's Day**

and

**November 25th - 26th
for the Thanksgiving Holiday**

Unplug With Meaningful Community Programs

Most adults have a vague memory of a time when “checking for messages” meant listening to an answering machine. We carried on with our days without relying on cell phones and managed just fine. But today, we are more connected than ever through our smart phones and other devices.

Our phones are so much more now—from cameras to calendars to social media connections—and truly disconnecting from them can be tough. But it is even harder for our kids to unplug because they only know life with these tiny screens. It is difficult for them to imagine life without computers, gaming devices, tablets or cell phones.

There is great value in unplugging for children and adults, even if it is for just a short period of time. For kids, time away from the screen to be outside with other children allows them to connect with nature and others in a way that a virtual experience simply does not allow. They are able to experience life in the moment and allow their creativity and energy to break free.

Fortunately, we have access to great community programs and organizations like 4-H, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, etc. that provide children with a safe place to play, learn and grow, while cultivating new skills and interests.

These types of clubs and programs offer kids an opportunity to explore activities and interests outside of school academics. Children can investigate areas they might not otherwise have access to and discover new interests and passions. They often learn new skills and strengthen existing ones. Community programs also foster important leadership development and public speaking skills. Through guided and informal play and activities, children learn problem-solving and interpersonal skills that enable them to resolve conflicts peacefully and improve interpersonal relationships.




Photo by Bob Nichols, USDA

Adults can also find meaningful opportunities to spend time with the kids when we all unplug. From board games to craft projects to playing in the park, there are many ways we can unplug for some family fun.

While you and your children are disconnecting, take a moment to identify potential energy savings. Unplug electronics that are not in use to avoid “vampire” energy loss. This is the energy that is drained from technology and electronics even when they are not in use. For example, although it is turned off, your TV is waiting to receive a signal from the remote and your DVR is waiting to record the next show.

Let's encourage youngsters to step away from the screens and join in. To play and be part of an organization that helps them connect with others and find meaningful interactions and explore new activities and interests.

When you do plug back in, NorVal Electric is here to help you save money and energy by connecting you with our energy saving programs and services. While we would love to see you in person, we are also just a call or click away. 

It's a Matter of (Co-op!) Principles

You may recall that last month, our column touched on the first three Cooperative Principles, so this month, we would like to tell you about the remaining four principles. The Cooperative Principles are essential to the co-op business model and benefit all members of the co-op.

Autonomy and Independence

The fourth principal, Autonomy and Independence, means that the co-op operates in an autonomous way that is solely directed and guided by its members, reflecting the values and needs of our local community. This means the co-op is not being influenced by leaders or shareholders several states away. Instead, the co-op is led by the local members it serves.

Education and Training

The fifth principle, Education and Training, focuses on enhancing the knowledge of co-op employees and board members, which enables them to contribute to the development of the co-op.

By investing in continuous learning for our employees and board members, our co-op is making a commitment not just to individual professional and personal growth, but to the future of the co-op and the high quality of service our members expect and deserve. It's a win-win situation.

We also strive to inform our members (that's you!) and the public about the mission and operations of the co-op. In fact, that's why you receive this magazine every month, so we can share the latest co-op news and updates, as well as energy efficiency and safety tips.

Cooperation Among Cooperatives

Cooperation among cooperatives is the sixth principle and fosters the way that co-ops work together to address bigger challenges. While this principle applies to all types of

cooperatives, it is especially relevant in the energy industry. In our case, we put this principle in action after major storms and disasters that cause widespread power outages. When this happens, we call on nearby co-ops to come to our aid and assist with restoration efforts—and we of course extend the same help to them when they need us.

In addition, because we are part of the national electric co-op network, we can connect and collaborate with other electric co-ops to tackle industry-related challenges, like cybersecurity and an everchanging energy landscape.

Concern for Community

The seventh principle, Concern for Community, is essential to who we are as cooperatives. We serve our community not only by being an essential service, but by helping to power our local economy. Whether through economic development, volunteerism or donations to local causes, we invest in this community because it's our home too.

This is a time of year for reflection and topping NorVal Electric's list of things we are grateful for is our wonderful community. You will find that most cooperatives bring good people together to make good things happen in the community. We hope you feel that way about us, your local electric co-op.

On behalf of everyone at NorVal Electric, we are thankful for your membership and we hope you have a wonderful Thanksgiving. 🍂



COOK UP ENERGY SAVINGS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON.

- Clean oven burners regularly.
- Match the pan size to the burner you're using.
- Use small appliances like slow cookers and toaster ovens when possible.

From our table to yours,
Happy Thanksgiving!

Nick's Notes

By Nick Dulaney
Line Superintendent

I hope the harvest season went well and everyone stayed safe. If you have noticed any low hanging lines while moving your farm equipment, please give the office a call so we can raise them for next year.

The crews have been working on the single-phase line out at the Pines recreation area. They have gone pole to pole adding frost brackets, vibration dampeners and replacing worn out hardware. This line has been subject to years of vibration and has caused numerous outages.

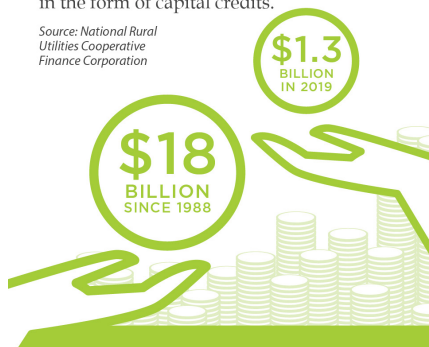
After this, we will be working on the Wagner Road single-phase line. We'll be adding frost brackets, replacing worn out hardware and replacing the older copper conductor with new ACSR wire.

Lastly, we are trying to finish up all of the new construction for underground before the colder temperatures shut us down. Once the trencher and backhoe have been put away for the winter, we will be focusing on our tree trimming and line patrol. 🍂

Did You Know?

Electric cooperatives have retired \$18 billion to members since 1988 – \$1.3 billion in 2019 alone. Because electric co-ops operate at cost, any excess revenues (called margins) are allocated and retired to members in the form of capital credits.

Source: National Rural
Utilities Cooperative
Finance Corporation



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Fall is the perfect time to prep your home for the upcoming winter chill. One of the best ways you can save energy and stay comfortable is to caulk and weatherstrip areas that typically need sealing. Start by sealing around windows and doors. Seal plumbing, ducting, and areas where electrical wiring comes through walls, floors and ceilings for additional energy savings.

Source: energy.gov



Know what's below.
Call before you dig.