



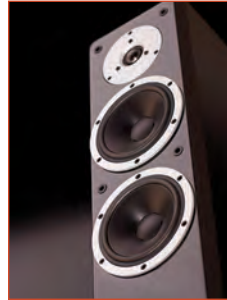
CURRENT COMMUNICATOR

www.mycvec.com
Honest • Fair • Responsible

MEMBER NEWSLETTER OF CENTRAL VIRGINIA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

“Improving the quality of your life in a quietly impressive way.”
December 2013 Volume 22, Number 4

CLEARING THE PATH TO KEEP THE LIGHTS ON:



When you flip a switch, you expect a light to turn on, your stove to get hot, music to stream from speakers, and the game to appear on the screen. **Know that it is CVEC's #1 goal, too.** We work every day to keep the lights on for your pleasure and convenience, and we deliver a dedicated and efficient emergency response when a storm knocks down the poles and wires that deliver energy to your home.

A big component of CVEC's reliability program is keeping power lines free of trees and their branches. CVEC clears the corridor beneath and around its lines to keep the lights on ... and to keep our line crews safe and sound. This practice is known as right-of-way management (or ROW).

You will likely see ROW contract crews once every five years in your neighborhood, trimming mature trees growing outside of the 40-foot ROW or removing young saplings

so that they will not grow into the wire zone of the distribution power lines. But on a daily, year-round basis, we look for “danger” trees: those dead or diseased trees that threaten the power lines. In the past 18 months, we've removed 1500 danger trees growing beyond the bounds of the ROW, reducing the threat of damage to our 4600 miles of power lines.

We ask our members to alert us about such trees. Contact forester@mycvec.com with the contact info and location.

Look for these updates about ROW trimming in future CVEC newsletters.

In the first months of 2014,

CVEC contract crews will be clearing right-of-way in the following areas:

- Concord
- Cunningham
- Kidd's Store
- Montebello
- Oakville
- Piney River
- Stonewall
- Tyro



CVEC spends \$1.6 million each year for right-of-way maintenance.

Why not go underground?

CVEC has overhead and underground distribution lines that comprise a good portion of our \$200 million plant value. If the Co-op chose to abandon and remove all of the overhead lines and then install underground distribution lines, it would likely cost members \$1 billion! On a side note, while there would be fewer outages for the higher-cost underground system, those outages would be more difficult to repair.

Continued on next page

KEEPING THE LIGHTS ON

There are two ways that a distribution system loses power:

1. One is by “Acts of God” ... snow, ice, wind, storms, heavy rain. These events can’t be controlled or even predicted, and unfortunately can disturb life for thousands across our 14-county grid. Miles of distribution power lines can be affected with hundreds of isolated faults, or points of damage. Everyone at your Co-op goes to work in these times and line crews from neighboring utilities drive in to assist. Restoration efforts don’t stop except for unsafe weather conditions or mandatory rest ... or until the last member’s power is back on.



Always report any outage so we can include you on our maps. Our crews can view this info on computers in their trucks and use it to determine the best plan for power restoration.

2. The second kind of power loss is usually more isolated in nature: a tree falling from outside the right-of-way, an animal or bird contacting the line, motor accidents, or equipment related issues ... all happening outside of major weather events.

Central Virginia is known for its beautiful views and acres of rolling fields and forests. But we all know trees can interfere with power lines. Take a lovely tall tree, add a little rain to soften the ground, follow with a windy but sunny day. Over the tree goes, falling into a pole and/or lines, causing power loss to everyone down line from the point of damage. When that fallen tree is remote and hard to reach, restoration of your service might be slower than hoped. ⚡

Safety first!

Always stay clear of downed power lines. Let CVEC remove any downed trees and branches and restore the power lines to their proper place.

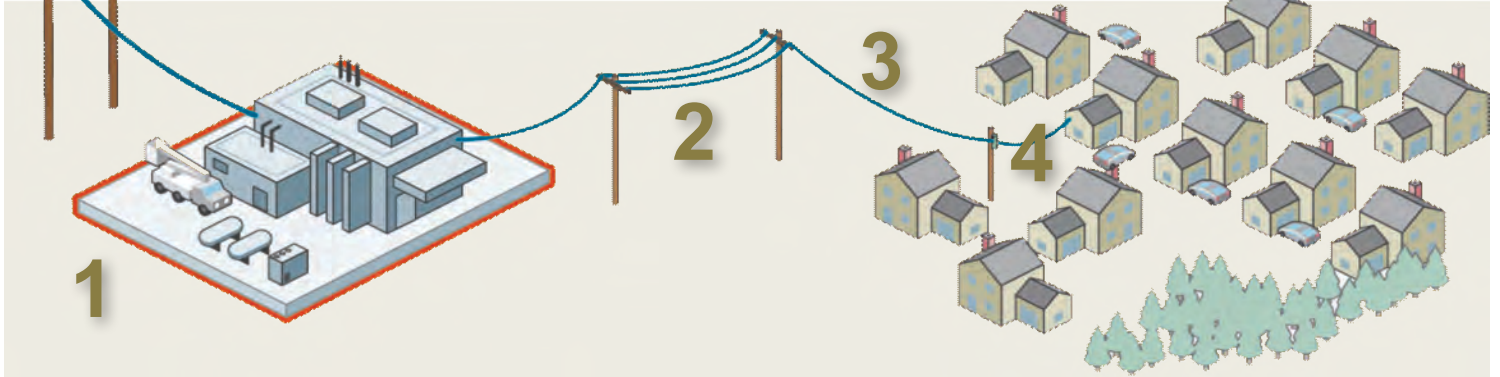


**CVEC DELIVERS VALUE:
COMFORT &
CONVENIENCE**



WORKING DOWN THE LINES:

During an outage, we are constantly evaluating how to get power restored to as many people and as quickly as possible. We know that members who see a damaged line in their front yard can't understand why a red truck hasn't already pulled in. But be assured, once the power has been restored from the substation to the front yard damage, that red truck **WILL** be there. We first correct the damage closest to the substation and along the three-phase lines, then work down the line along the primary and tap lines.



1. *Substation Outages:*

As a distribution Co-op, CVEC is dependent on the delivery of wholesale energy through the transmission systems of Appalachian Power and Dominion Virginia Power. During major outages and on other occasions, CVEC must await repairs to the transmission system before there is any opportunity to deliver power by way of the CVEC distribution system.

2. *Outages on Primary Circuits:*

Each substation has two or more three-phase circuits that serve as primary distribution lines.

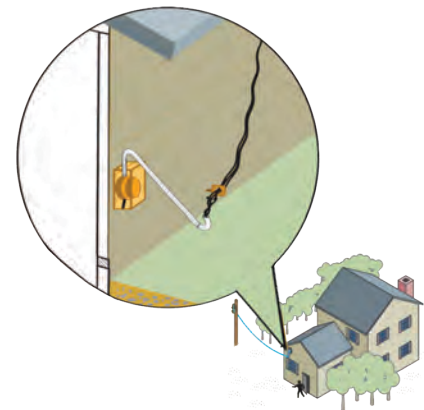
- ✓ The A, B, & C phase each carries energy and operates independently of one another. If one phase trips, causing some members to be without power while members on the other side of the street have lights, this kind of outage can cause confusion.
- ✓ As mentioned earlier, faults are cleared starting at the substation and proceeding out toward the end of the primary circuit, a strategy that is not only necessary to allow the flow of power, but to restore service to the most members as early as possible.
- ✓ Repairs along the main circuits may be time-consuming, often requiring removing damaged utility poles, setting new poles, attaching new cross arms and transformers, and repairing damaged conductors. During major events, the same process may be required a few hundred feet down line (*away from the substation*).

3. *Single-Phase Feeders or Tap-Lines:*

These single-phase lines take off from the three-phase primary circuits to serve local neighborhoods and clusters of homes. As repair crews move along the primary circuits, some crews will check fuses at the head of each tap line and follow the single-phase lines to repair any damage along the line.

4. *Single Outages:*

The final step in restoring service during a widespread and extended outage is to restore service to individual homes or businesses. This effort may require simply closing a fuse or may require chain saw work and repairs to distribution equipment. Repairs at individual services are effective only after repairs have been made along the primary circuits and tap lines between the substation and your home. 📍



No way to avoid it. Winter's chill is on its way.

You may not be able to control the outside temps, but it's never too late to work on your inside environment, at home and work.

- ✓ Have your HVAC system serviced by a professional.
- ✓ Inspect your ductwork and repair leaks or disconnections.
- ✓ Set your thermostat to the lowest comfortable temp in the winter (68° F suggested).
- ✓ Be sure your HVAC air vents (inflow and out) are clean and not blocked by furniture/objects.
- ✓ Replace HVAC air filters once a month.
- ✓ Turning off your central heat system and using space heaters does **not** save money.
- ✓ Reverse the direction of your ceiling fans so air bounces off the ceiling, then comes down into the living space. This also eliminates downward breezes that might chill.
- ✓ Be sure your chimney flues are closed when not in use.
- ✓ Open window treatment on sunny days and close it on cold nights.
- ✓ Install CFL, halogen, or LED light bulbs in the most-used fixtures.
- ✓ Lower the thermostat on your water heater to 120° F.
- ✓ Wash only full loads of dishes and avoid the dishwasher's drying cycle.
- ✓ Wash full loads of clothes in cold water whenever possible.
- ✓ Air dry your clothes. If you use a dryer, check the vent for any blockages.
- ✓ Check refrigerator, freezer, and oven doors seals for leaks.
- ✓ Power down your computer and monitor.
- ✓ Use power strips for your home electronics and turn the power strips off when the equipment is not in use. Televisions and other home electronic equipment use energy even when in standby mode.
- ✓ Caulk and weatherstrip windows and doors to seal cracks. This step can eliminate the largest cause of heat loss.
- ✓ Insulate your attic and any unheated crawl spaces beneath your house. In Virginia, attics should have R38-R60 level of insulation. Floors R24-R30. (from www.energystar.gov)
 - ✓ Use bathroom exhaust fans with care. One fan can drain all of the heated air from your home in about an hour.
 - ✓ Humidity feels warmer. Using a humidifier allows you to turn down your thermostat.

Fuel Assistance Phone Numbers

Should you find you are having trouble paying your monthly energy bills during very cold or hot weather, you may wish to contact one of these local services for assistance:

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Albemarle	P: 434-972-4010 F: 434-972-4080
Amherst	P: 434-946-9330 F: 434-946-9319
Appomattox	P: 434-352-7125 F: 434-352-0064
Buckingham	P: 434-969-4246 F: 434-969-1449
Campbell	P: 434-332-9585 F: 434-332-9699
Cumberland	P: 804-492-4915 F: 804-492-9346
Fluvanna	P: 434-842-8221 F: 434-842-2776
Goochland	P: 804-556-5332 F: 804-556-4718
Louisa	P: 540-967-1320 F: 540-967-0593
Nelson	P: 434-263-7160 F: 434-263-8605
Orange	P: 540-672-1155 F: 540-672-9118
Prince Edward	P: 434-392-3113 F: 434-392-8453

OTHER IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Alliance for Interfaith Ministries

Charlottesville 434-972-1702 / 1704

CPAC

Nelson 434-263-5573

Cumberland 804-492-4926

MACCA

Fluvanna 434-842-2521

Louisa 540-967-9522

Nelson 434-263-8119

Monticello Area Community

Charlottesville 434-295-3171

Salvation Army

Charlottesville 434-295-4058

Lynchburg 434-845-5939

United Way

Fluvanna 434-842-3757

NEW PAYMENT OPTION FOR YOU:

Prepaid Electric Service

How does it work? Rather than opening a paper bill to discover what it costs for the last 30 days of energy usage, Prepaid Service allows participating members to check on the energy usage and add funds to their account as needed. Think of it as adding gas to your car when convenient and according to your cash flow.

Pay once a week, twice a month, whenever you wish. These are a few of the benefits:

- ✓ It's a voluntary program.
- ✓ No security deposit is required and members who have a deposit can get a refund.
- ✓ Members can check their daily account balance and energy usage via phone or website.
- ✓ CVEC will contact members when their accounts are getting low (*when the account balance reaches \$25 or about 5 days before a \$0 balance.*)
- ✓ Many people on prepaid reduce energy usage by 10-15%.

Look for additional program details after CVEC receives final approval to begin the Prepaid Program from the State Corporation Commission.



See Your CVEC Account Online!

Your Co-op is expanding access to your account so you can view your energy consumption month by month or day by day. You can also see what your power costs are for any particular time period to help target high usage days and help you know when you should take action.

Access MyCVEC will also allow you to view your billing and payment history from month to month . . . or look back over previous years. Combined with weather data, you will have the peace of mind that your usage is appropriate for the weather and your activities.

Want to:

- » update your account?
- » change a phone number or e-mail address?
- » sign up for paperless billing?
- » send a request for service?
- » report an outage?
- » review your bill online, then click a link to pay?

You'll be able to do all of these, any time of day, at www.MyCVEC.com. Safe and simple!

CVEC expects to unveil the new option around the New Year.




Free Online Payment Options ... EXPANDED!

CVEC members now enjoy the option to pay online or over the phone without a third-party charge. Use your credit or debit card or your checking, savings, or money market account. All are free and convenient.

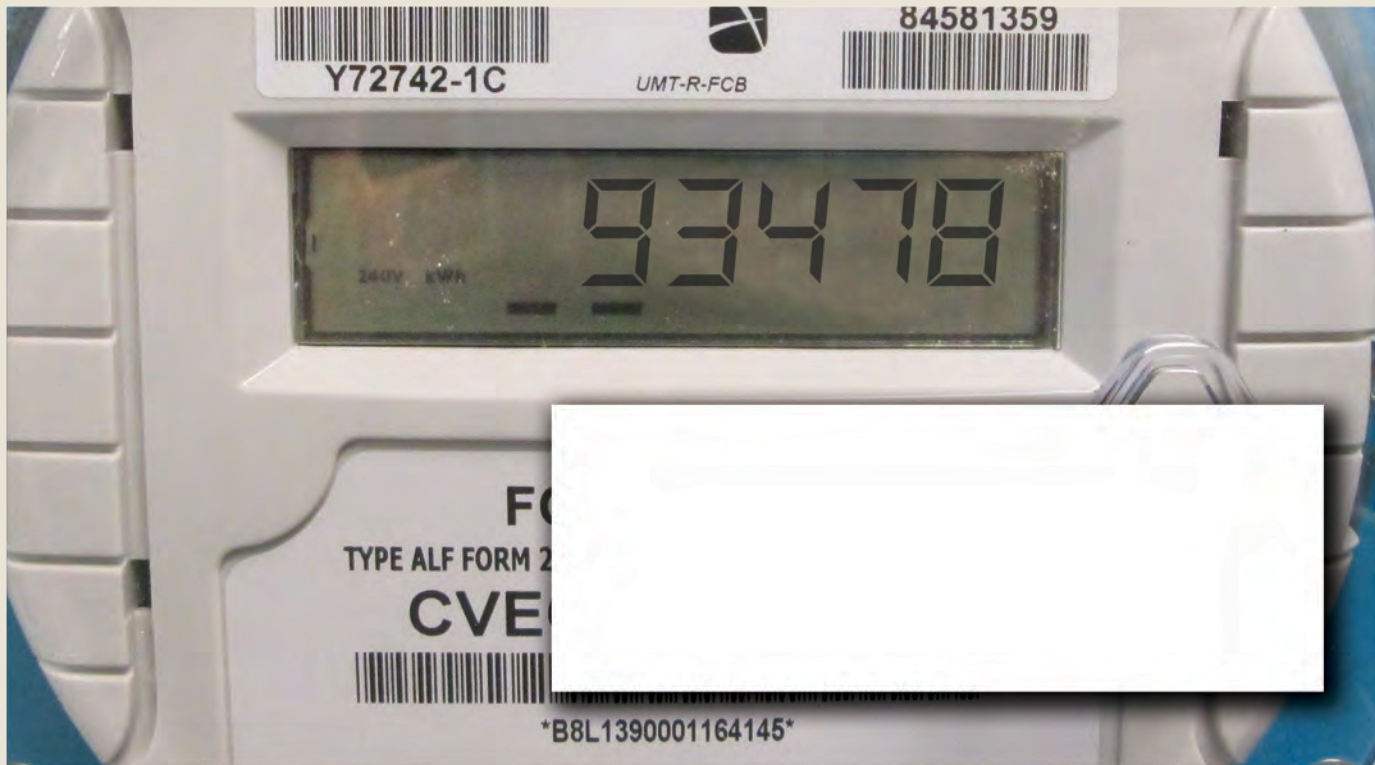
CVEC has worked with Western Union Speedpay to add two new features:

- » Now, members with multiple accounts will be able to view those accounts on one page and make a single payment to apply to two or more CVEC electric accounts.
- » Also, members have asked for the option to set a recurring payment function for credit card payments, eliminating the need to visit the site each month.

These new features are both scheduled to be activated before the New Year!

Visit www.mycvec.com and click the link to **Pay My Bill** for the convenience of free online payments. 

www.mycvec.com

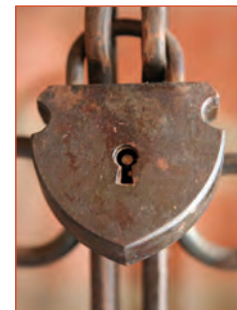


A METER MOMENT

Your Co-op has 35,000 meters attached to homes, barns, churches, and businesses across the service area. Each meter measures the amount of energy that you and the other Co-op members demand from CVEC. We say demand because every time you activate a switch or turn on an appliance, you are calling for more electricity to be delivered in order to meet your needs and wishes.

CVEC obtains a reading of the total energy delivered to your home or business with equipment located at each CVEC substation that polls the individual meters through the power lines. When contacted by the substation equipment, each meter responds by sending the meter reading over the power line on the 60-hertz electric sine wave. (Yes, your meter reading rides on electricity, over the distribution conductors, back to the substation.) Once the reading transmission is complete, the meter goes back to passively counting the kilowatt-hours delivered to you.

Once a year, CVEC will visit your meter to compare the electronic reading with the actual numbers on the meter. The Co-op also maintains a regular (10-15 years) testing and replacement schedule to ensure that the meters have not slowed down over time. Those are a couple of important reasons that the Co-op needs clear and unrestricted access to the meter on your home or business ... and we thank you for your help.



If you have security locks on your property gates, please contact CVEC to arrange for access to power lines and meters at all times, and in case of emergencies.

77th Annual Meeting:
The 2014 Annual Member Meeting is tentatively scheduled for May 28 and will be confirmed by the CVEC Directors at their December 2013 meeting. Petitions for Director nominations are due by March 14, 2014.

May
28