

# CONNECT

**ENERGYUNITED'S MONTHLY MEMBER NEWSLETTER**



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A LETTER FROM

# OUR CEO H. WAYNE WILKINS



There's a lot to love about the great state of North Carolina. We have amazing food, friendly people, a warm climate and access to both the mountains and the ocean. With coastal access, however, comes hurricane season, which lasts through November. But there's no need to worry — with Safety as one of EnergyUnited's Core Values, we will work cooperatively to get through this season together.

In our 80+ years of experience, we've discovered that fortune favors the well prepared, which is why preparing an emergency response kit is paramount. When looking to build your own, you should include things like a flashlight, blankets, matches, batteries, canned or packaged goods, some bottled water— anything you need to get by without power while we work to restore it. Though it may seem like a lot, we believe the old adage of better safe than sorry rings true, especially where hurricanes are concerned.

If your family relies on power for medical reasons, or being out of power is just not an option, then investing in a home backup generator is a great way to bridge the gap between outage and restoration. They're specifically designed to keep your lights on, appliances running, and family safe during severe storms. If you're interested in installing a home backup generator, contact us and an EnergyUnited professional will help get you situated.

In this month's Connect, you will see a myriad of tips, best practices and things to look out for. If it ever feels overwhelming, our customer care team is always here to help!

**H. Wayne Wilkins**

# THE STEPS TO RESTORING POWER

Restoring power after an outage is a big job that involves much more than simply throwing a switch or removing a tree from a line. **The main goal** is to restore power safely to the greatest number of members in the shortest time possible. The most common cause for outages is due to damage caused by fallen trees, and because of this we continue our right-of-way program throughout the year to mitigate damage come storm season.

## **STEP 1: Tend to Transmission Lines**

Transmission lines supply power to one or more distribution substations—these lines seldom fail but can be damaged by a hurricane. Tens of thousands of people can be served by one high-voltage transmission line, so if there's damage, this gets attention first.

## **STEP 2: Local Distribution Substations**

A co-op may have several local distribution substations, each serving thousands of consumers. When a major outage occurs, EnergyUnited prioritizes its response to substation outages due to the large number of members that are often affected by these events. A problem here could be caused by failure in the transmission system supplying the substation. If the problem can be corrected at the substation level, power may be restored to a large number of people.

## **STEP 3: Check the Supply Lines**

Main distribution supply lines are checked next if the problem cannot be isolated at the substation. These supply lines carry electricity away from the substation to a group of consumers, such as a town or housing development. When power is restored at this stage, all consumers served by this supply line could see the lights come on, as long as there is no problem farther down the line.

## **STEP 4: Look for downed tap lines**

The final supply lines, called tap lines, carry power to the utility poles or underground transformers outside houses or other buildings. Line crews fix the remaining outages based on restoring service to the greatest number of consumers.

## **STEP 5: Handle the problem close to home**

Sometimes, damage will occur on the service line between your house and the transformer on the nearby pole. This can explain why you have no power when your neighbor does. Your co-op needs to know you have an outage here, so a service crew can repair it.

**For more information about our outage restoration process, visit [EnergyUnited.com/restoring-power](https://www.energyunited.com/restoring-power).**

# YOUR CONNECTION TO COMMUNITY

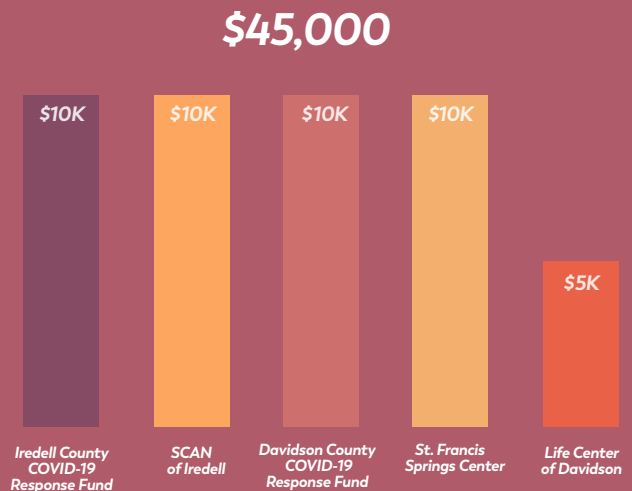
## COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE

EnergyUnited is committed to supporting the communities we serve, especially in times of hardship and trouble. The COVID-19 pandemic has certainly brought about unprecedented economic and public health challenges and EnergyUnited has met these challenges with an unprecedented response.

As of June 30, the EU Foundation has granted nearly **\$180,000** to individuals and non-profit organizations throughout our 19 county service area, with a majority of these request related to Covid-19. These funds have been awarded to assist with community efforts to respond to the pandemic, with two donations going to county coronavirus response and recovery funds established by Iredell and Davidson counties.

We always search for ways to utilize our tangible resources as a means of improving the lives of the people who live in our communities. In addition to offering grants through the EnergyUnited Foundation, we also help direct our consumers to many other available resources.

**The Crisis Intervention Program**, which is managed through your local Department of Social Services office, received additional funding for the 2020-2021 fiscal year at the beginning of July. To learn more about this program and other community assistance programs offered in your county, visit [energyunited.com/assistance](http://energyunited.com/assistance) or dial 211 for a third-party utility bill assistance program referral.



MONTHLY NONPROFIT DONATIONS

## CAST YOUR VOTE!

There's still time to cast your vote for this year's Board of Directors Election! Ballots will be accepted until **SEPTEMBER 10, 2020**, and the winners will be announced at our Annual Meeting on **SEPTEMBER 17!**

### WAYS TO VOTE:



#### EMAIL

If we have your email address, you should have received an email with your ballot on August 10.



#### U.S. MAIL

If you opted for a hard copy, you should have received one in the mail.



## MEMBER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

As a member of EnergyUnited, your feedback is important. We always want to know how we can deliver incredible consumer experiences and your insight is very helpful. One way that we collect valuable feedback is through our **Member Advisory Committee (MAC)**, which is comprised of EnergyUnited members and EU Propane customers. The committee is split up into three groups representing each of our three regions, with meetings held in Lake Norman, Statesville and Lexington.

So, you may be wondering what qualifies someone to serve on the Member Advisory Committee. In addition to searching for individuals who are EnergyUnited consumers, we are always searching for individuals who are committed to serving our communities. In fact, we even collaborate with MAC members in reviewing scholarship and grant applications.

EnergyUnited MAC members are ambassadors of the co-op who share our enthusiasm and interest in serving EnergyUnited members and communities. Do you have a passion for service? If so, we would love to learn more about you and listen to your thoughts on how we can work together to strengthen our communities. We are currently recruiting new members and encourage you to contact us if you are interested in joining our Lake Norman, Statesville or Lexington group. Each group meets three times per year to discuss recent cooperative news and updates on strategic initiatives.

To learn more about our Member Advisory Committee and see our October 2020 meeting schedule, simply visit [ENERGYUNITED.COM/MEMBER-ADVISORY-COMMITTEE](https://www.energyunited.com/member-advisory-committee).



## LAST CALL FOR BRIGHT IDEAS APPLICATIONS!

Teachers looking to finance their Bright Ideas for the classroom (virtual and not) should apply for EnergyUnited's annual Bright Ideas program! Every year, EnergyUnited grants up to \$2,000 for innovative, hands-on classroom projects to teachers within our 19-county service area. Applications are open from now until September 15, 2020.

**EDUCATORS CAN LEARN MORE AND APPLY ONLINE AT [NCBRIGHTIDEAS.COM](https://www.ncbrightideas.com).**



## MEET OUR PEAK PROGRAMS

This summer, we launched two initiatives to help you better manage your energy consumption. Check them out!



**BEAT THE PEAK** makes it easy to save energy and money. Members are notified by text and/or email when extreme temperatures—like cold winter mornings or hot summer afternoons—are in the forecast. These “peak” energy periods create greater demand for electricity, which drives up energy costs. EnergyUnited’s Beat the Peak alerts encourage members to adjust their thermostats in real time and to shift when they use large appliances, reducing the overall demand for power. This allows the cooperative to better manage costs, saving money for everyone. The program is free and voluntary for all EnergyUnited members.



**PEAK TIME PERKS** provides incentives—an initial \$50 electric bill credit, plus an additional \$20 credit for each subsequent year—for members who purchase and enroll their eligible smart thermostat. By connecting the thermostats to Wi-Fi, members are rewarded for allowing EnergyUnited to remotely adjust them during peak electricity demand periods. Participating members receive text and/or email notifications when their thermostats will be automatically adjusted to balance energy savings. Members always have the option to manually change the temperature on their thermostat and opt out of any Peak Time Perks event.

**LEARN MORE AND SIGN UP AT [ENERGYUNITED.COM/DEMAND-RESPONSE](https://www.energyunited.com/demand-response)**

## THE 2020 **#WHOPOWERSYOU** CONTEST

We are proud to announce that we will be participating in the fifth annual #WhoPowersYou contest, a program created to honor inspirational community members across the country. This is an opportunity for members to nominate someone who has made a positive impact on their family, workplace, neighborhood or beyond.

In addition to being nationally recognized, the person you nominate could win one of four (4) cash prizes. In 2018, our very own Rich Gustin received honorable mention and took home an award of \$500!

To nominate someone who powers you, visit **[TOUCHSTONEENERGY.COM/WHO-POWERS-YOU](https://www.touchstoneenergy.com/who-powers-you)**.



## HAVEN'T SIGNED UP FOR E-BILLING? **HERE'S WHY YOU SHOULD.**

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Three lucky winners will receive \$100 Visa® gift cards just by signing up for e-billing! Last month, **BERNARD ELLIS**, **FELISHA WALLER**, and **CHRISTOPHER REES** took home prizes and a whole lot of convenience with e-billing.

**SIGN UP TODAY BY LOGGING IN TO "MY ACCOUNT" AND UPDATING YOUR BILLING PREFERENCES.**

## HELP OUT WITH **OPERATION ROUND-UP**

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Operation Round-Up is a powerful way for EnergyUnited members to help others in their community by rounding up their monthly bills. Donations can be as little as a penny or as much as 99 cents. It may not seem like much, but it adds up quickly, making for a greater impact on the lives of our members. Rounding up your bill each month can have such positive impacts in our communities. Enroll in Operation Round-Up today!

**TO LEARN MORE OR TO SIGN UP TO DONATE, PLEASE CALL US AT 1-800-522-3793.**



# RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES

## WORD SEARCH

The electricity that powers our homes is generated by a variety of fuel sources, including renewables. Renewable energy comes from natural resources like the wind and the sun. Can you find all the renewable-energy-related words in the puzzle below?



### WORD BANK

- HYDROPOWER
- WIND TURBINE
- RENEWABLE
- SOLAR PANELS
- WIND ENERGY
- GEOTHERMAL
- BIOMASS
- GENERATION
- SOLAR ENERGY



## A NOTE ON OUR ANNUAL MEETING

This year's annual meeting will be taking place virtually to better protect the health and safety of our members and election participants. Visit any of our social media channels on **SEPTEMBER 17 AT 4 P.M.** to hear the results of this year's annual meeting and 2020 Board of Directors Election.

**TO LEARN MORE, VISIT: [ENERGYUNITED.COM/DIRECTOR-ELECTIONS](https://energyunited.com/director-elections).**