



THE ROLE OF TRUSTEES AT HWE



George Walton,
 President and CEO

Are you aware that you are eligible to run for the Hancock-Wood Board of Trustees? Any Member can become a trustee as long as he or she meets the required guidelines.

Members of Hancock-Wood have a voice in the service they receive.

Trustees represent the Member voice and guide the cooperative, representing the Members' best interest when making important decisions. Hancock-Wood Members vote for these 10 trustees, each of whom represent their district.

Some cooperatives use the term director instead of trustee as "one who guides the course of action." This is key, because the role of a trustee is not to be involved in daily decision-making, but to guide, point, and direct. This is why trustees normally come to the cooperative office only once per month. Trustees are entrusted with a duty to focus on the financial well-being of Hancock-Wood.

Trustees are not involved in specific employee affairs or services, precise departmental or staffing plans, or other micro issues. They look at the business from a macro point of view, so the daily decision-making is left to the president/CEO and employees. A trustee should have the best interest of the cooperative at heart, without placing his or her own interest or agenda first. They should have the capability to guide the president/CEO through the formulation of sound policies, which protect the financial and operating integrity of the cooperative as well as protect the rights of the membership.

Members of Hancock-Wood have a voice in the service they receive. One way Members can exercise their ownership is by expressing opinions and concerns to their trustee representatives. Being a Member of the co-op's board is an incredibly important position in our community. A trustee's decisions will impact the co-op, including service rates, rights-of-way, and operations. This paid

position holds great responsibility and requires men and women who understand their community's needs.

It is important for us to elect effective trustees to our board. We must have a pool of strong candidates, which is why we encourage new Members to run in our board elections. Fresh ideas and new perspectives help us to enact policies that could potentially keep our community competitive. Not only do we need to encourage our friends and family to run for positions on the board, but we need to get out and vote for those individuals we think will act in the best interest of our co-op community.

Our board is a democratically elected body nominated by Members residing within the cooperative's service territory and voted into position by any Member who chooses to participate in the co-op's open election. Any co-op Member (in good standing) is welcome to run for an open position on the board. At Hancock-Wood, we hold elections every May, and the results are announced at our June Annual Meeting. This year, it is on June 10.

You can make a difference at your co-op by taking on the role of a trustee. Call 800-445-4840 or visit hwe.coop and click on About Us for more information on how to run for our board of trustees and to find out more about the election process.





Think Energy \$mart with Bruce



Bruce Warnecke
 Energy Services Advisor

I have been explaining different segments of your energy bill the last few months, and this month, I will finish my suggestions for lowering your baseload electric usage by focusing on appliances.

Almost all appliances in your home are considered baseload electric users because they are used approximately the same amount every month. According to Energystar.gov, appliances make up about one-third of your baseload energy cost.

Some older appliances give opportunity for energy-saving possibilities by replacing them, while others do not. Electric clothes dryers and cooking ranges use the same technology now as they have in the past and thus do not offer significant energy

savings by replacing them. Other home appliances such as refrigerators, freezers, and dehumidifiers can provide energy savings by replacing them due to the changes in technology to refrigeration systems in the past 15 years. A new refrigerator can save 30 percent in energy cost over a unit that is 15 years old. Washing machines and dishwashers can provide energy savings in two ways. Today's washing appliances have a lower electrical demand as a result of more efficient motors, and they use less water than units manufactured more than 15 years ago.

If you are not ready to replace your existing appliances, there are still simple ways to lower your utility costs from appliances. Not using the dry cycle on your dishwasher and always washing a full load are a couple ways to help. For more tips and info, please visit hwe.coop/save-energy.



We want to
THANK YOU
 for increasing HWE's
 satisfaction score in 2016!

Now we need your help to achieve an even higher score for 2017!

At the end of May, Hancock-Wood will again work with NRECA Market Research Services to complete a Member satisfaction survey. The surveys will be both by phone and e-mail, but not everyone will be contacted. If you are contacted, we would greatly appreciate a few minutes of your time to share your opinions of the cooperative. *All information is confidential.*

We strive to provide all Members with safe, affordable, and reliable electric service. By participating in the survey, you will help us make decisions that benefit you, your family, and your neighbors. Help us to do our best for you.

Thank you!



You Put Co-ops First! Legislative Meeting postponed

You did it! Thanks to your participation in the Co-ops Vote campaign and the Action Committee for Rural Electrification (ACRE®), our last major election appears to have turned the tide in favor of electric co-ops. Although nothing is a surety, many of our newly elected and re-elected officials support electric co-op rights, and that can be a game changer for keeping electric rates stable. Co-op employees and managers are grateful you fought alongside us in this effort, so you have our gratitude and appreciation.

As of this writing, the appointments of all 16 members of the U.S. Cabinet have yet to be confirmed by the Senate, so it is difficult for any legislator or elected official to predict how these most senior officers of the

executive branch will advise the president. Because of this, and the fact that there are no timely issues as of yet for co-op Members to rally behind, Hancock-Wood has pushed back its typically annual ACRE® Legislative Meeting to 2018.

We will continue to provide updates and alerts as they become available.



Last year, over 200 Members listened to Rep. Bob Latta discuss the importance of electric co-ops.



March rebuild program update

In March, Hancock-Wood's rebuild program will continue with three-phase line rebuilds on Delaware Township roads 150 and 154 in Hancock County. Single-phase rebuild will begin along Cygnet and Emerson

roads in Bloom and Perry townships. In Wood County, in Center and Webster townships, Hancock-Wood will rebuild a single-phase line along Scotch Ridge Road. Learn more by visiting hwe.coop/construction-corner.



Keeping you safe and the power on

There are many ways that Hancock-Wood provides you with safe, reliable electric service. One of the most common ways is referred to as right-of-way clearing or vegetation management.

A right-of-way (ROW) refers to a strip of land underneath and around power lines that your electric cooperative is required to maintain safely. Trees must grow at a distance far enough from wires where they will not cause harm to people or disruption to electrical service. Specifications vary, but a general guideline of maintaining a safe ROW is 15 feet of clearance on either side of the primary lines. HWE also maintains safe clearances of above lines.

Clearing the ROW is critical for public safety and accessing equipment for maintenance and power restoration, as well as reliability of service for our Members. An average of 15 percent of power interruptions occurs when trees, shrubs, or bushes grow too close to power lines. HWE utilizes four approaches to maintain ROW: trimming/removal of trees, mechanical clearing (mowing), herbicides, and tree growth regulators. If a tree encroaches on this safe distance, our vegetation-management team will trim back branches or completely remove trees if the tree cannot be pruned properly to meet required industry

standards. A mechanical clearing device will be used to reestablish ROW that's overgrown with brush and vegetation. Herbicides are used to support the growth of low-growing plant species and to mitigate tall-growing trees. Tree growth regulators manage the tree's rate of growth, helping maximize the duration between trimmings.

Power lines carry high voltages, and a tree branch contacting power lines will become energized, which is incredibly dangerous — even deadly. Staying ahead of the game keeps us from needing to restore power outages caused by fallen trees. Contact Hancock-Wood if you decide to trim or remove trees near any electric lines, and never trim a tree in the ROW zone on your own. Visit hwe.coop to learn more.

DO YOU WANT TO SAVE \$300?

Did you know you have a chance to win \$300 off your next energy bill? Visit Hancock-Wood's website to sign up for e-mail alerts, news, and more to enter to win a quarterly drawing for \$300 off your next electric bill. Click on Members Connect to complete the form.

STORM SAFETY CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Spring has finally arrived with colorful flowers and warmer weather. But the season can also produce severe storms. The Energy Explorers want to remind everyone to stay safe when severe weather hits. Complete the crossword puzzle below and share these tips with your family and friends.



DOWN

1. Keep a _____ handy in case of a power outage.
2. If you hear _____ go inside. If you can hear it, you are close enough to be in danger from lightning.
3. Have a battery-powered weather _____ nearby so you can keep track of the severe weather.

ACROSS

4. Watch for signs of a thunderstorm, including dark skies, flashes of _____ or heavy winds.
5. If a tornado is heading your way, pick a safe _____ in your home where family can gather. The safest places would be a basement, storm cellar or interior room.
6. Practice a family _____ drill at least once a year.

Word Bank:
 Flashlight
 Tornado
 Radio
 Lightning
 Thunder
 Room