



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO

# Happy National Cooperative Month

October is National Co-op Month, and Hancock-Wood Electric is joining cooperatives across the U.S. to celebrate. Co-ops come in all shapes and sizes, but they all have a common goal: to provide goods or services for the members of the co-op.

Electric co-ops, including Hancock-Wood, exist to serve their members. Our priority is to provide affordable, reliable energy to our local communities. Because we are led by you, the members we serve, we can evolve to meet your needs. Our members can run for the board each year to help guide the cooperative and have a voice in your electric utility.

Hancock-Wood Electric is local and we're independent. But together, we're mighty: Across the country, local cooperatives work together and learn from one another to develop new technologies and infrastructure. And in the process, we bring electricity to one in eight Americans and more than 19 million homes, businesses, farms, and schools in 47 states. Co-ops themselves provide 71,000 great jobs, invest billions in local economies every year, and are a driving force in helping attract and grow business and industry in rural America.

The cooperative spirit always has been one of the best things about living in our community: neighbors looking out for neighbors and people working for the common good. Even as we celebrate our differences and our individual achievements, we know that we can't do everything alone; we're all in this together. And we are stronger and better for it. The power of community is what being an electric cooperative is all about.

Hancock-Wood started small, but quickly expanded, because of demand, into other northwest Ohio counties over the decades. Today, in addition to providing safe, reliable electric service, Hancock-Wood provides extraordinary member benefits, including patronage capital, rebate programs for energy-efficient appliances, member-only events, our annual business meeting, improved outage response via our SCADA systems, and more. Your co-op participates in local community events through sponsorships and donations, and our Operation Round Up Program has funded numerous schools, Boy Scouts,

churches, fire departments, and more in our local communities. We offer a community solar program, OurSolar, which allows members to choose a green energy option without having to invest in rooftop solar systems.

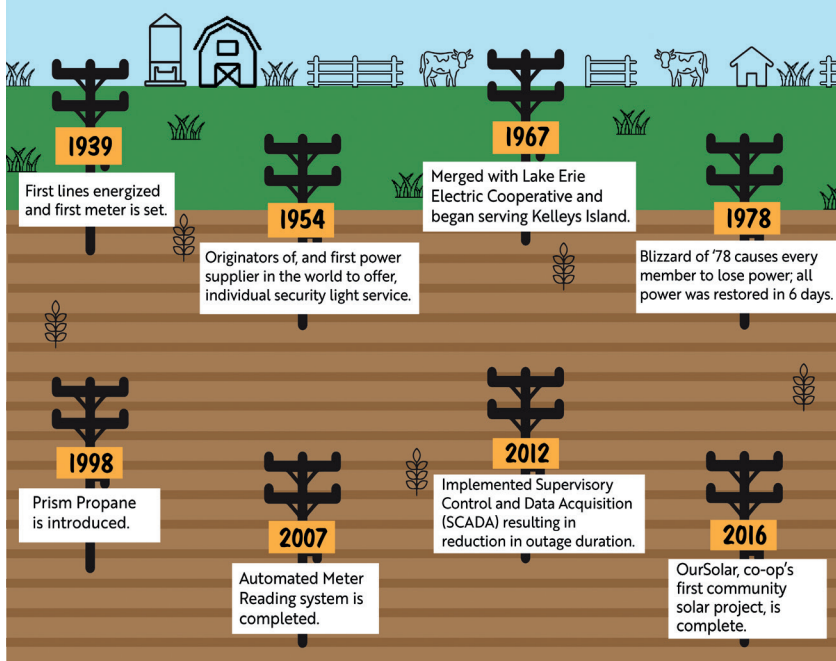
Hancock-Wood is governed by a board of trustees, overseeing nine districts in portions of Allen, Erie, Hancock, Hardin, Henry, Putnam, Sandusky, Seneca, Wood, and Wyandot counties. Our board elections take place in May each year. Your board of trustees typically meets once per month to establish basic business policies and rates. The board employs a president and CEO responsible for day-to-day business operations and overseeing each department at the co-op.

If you have questions about Hancock-Wood or the benefits of being a member, please call us or visit our website at [www.hwe.coop](http://www.hwe.coop).



**Bill Barnhart**  
PRESIDENT & CEO

## 85 YEARS OF HANCOCK-WOOD ELECTRIC





## Spotlight on a co-op member we serve



Legacy Farmers Cooperative is local to Northwest Ohio and has its main office on County Road 236 in Findlay. Legacy has several grain and agronomy (soil management and crop production) facility locations throughout the state of Ohio and has been in operation for 100 years. Services include agronomy, grain, and petroleum services, as well as lawn products and pet products. Legacy Farmers provides essential resources and assistance to both members and non-members.

President and CEO Mark Sunderman enjoys being a part of a cooperative. “I’ve been involved in cooperatives my whole life, so I see the value of it. Having an equity stake in the company that the customer does business with, I think is a huge value.” He also enjoys the friendliness and close-knit nature of rural communities. “To me, it’s just kind of exciting that there’s a nice community of people and even in our case, it’s a little larger geography. So, there’s different communities, but at the end of the day, they’re all part of one.” This interconnected nature embodies what a cooperative is all about — looking out for and connecting with one another.

Legacy Farmers Cooperative has made several generous donations, mainly focusing on agricultural causes. “If we can help enhance something, if we can provide a service that helps out, or if we can make a donation to something, I think that’s always a positive thing. We’ve been in business in the area for 100 years and we want to continue to make sure that we support the people who have supported us.”

Throughout those past 100 years, Legacy Farmers has faced some challenges. As all farmers know, the weather can have a major impact on agriculture. Sunderman reflects on how Legacy Farmers and its members made it through a difficult time with weather-related challenges: “In 2019, all the crops didn’t get planted and it takes a couple of years to recover from those tougher years. It’s tough on our farmer members as well as tough on the co-op that they own. That was a just a bump in the road. We’ve recovered very nicely on the other side of that and our farmers have been fortunate to have some very good years the last couple of years, and this year is shaping up to be one, as well.”

Sunderman also notes the current challenges that affect many businesses and individuals across America, such as higher interest and build rates. He commented on challenges in the agricultural industry, such as keeping up with the speed of quicker harvesting and planting.

What does the future hold for Legacy Farmers? In the next five years, Sunderman predicts, Legacy Farmers will continue to evolve and grow. Legacy’s main goal, he says, is to continue offering the goods and services they do today with enhanced efficiency to continue to add value to the cooperative. Legacy Farmers looks forward to supporting the co-op’s community, which has supported it for the past 100 years.

If you are interested in joining this cooperative, or learning more, check out the co-op’s website:

[www.legacyfarmers.com](http://www.legacyfarmers.com).

Happy National Cooperatives Month!



# Arlington Substation rebuild project



Old substation demolition work began in mid-August.

In August, our contract crew, Vaughn Industries, began work on the rebuilding of Hancock-Wood's Arlington Substation. This substation serves about 600 members in the Arlington area. The total project cost is approximately \$2.5 million and it will take six months to complete. This project is being completed in conjunction with AEP's line conversion project.



The following week, the old substation was completely torn down.

## Lineworker training

In August, the newest addition to the Hancock-Wood line crew, Jacob Auld, starting his training through the Central Ohio Lineworker Training (COLT) center. This program provides elite hands-on apprentice and journeyman lineworker training for lineworkers employed by the 24 electric co-ops located across the state of Ohio.



Hancock-Wood Electric Cooperative will be closed on Monday, Oct. 9, in observance of  
**Columbus Day**

## Volunteers needed for Community Trust Fund board

In October, members in districts 5 and 6 are eligible to run for our Community Trust Fund (CTF) board. The CTF board is a six-member board (separate from the Hancock-Wood Electric Cooperative board), which reviews all the Operation Round Up grant applications quarterly and approves applications for assistance, based on demonstrated need and funds available.

Operation Round Up is a program that rounds up participating members' bills to the nearest dollar then combines those amounts to fund grants to local organizations and individuals in need. The funds have helped support our local communities in the 10 counties served by Hancock-Wood Electric since 2008.

The board is responsible for reviewing applications prior to the quarterly meetings on the third Monday of February, May, August, and November and attend four board meeting per year. If you are interested in running for the CTF Board, please contact Leslie Guisinger at [leslie@hwe.coop](mailto:leslie@hwe.coop) or 419-257-5015. Applications must be received by Oct. 17, 2023.



## Important updates to your bill

Starting in November, if you previously had your meter read on the sixth, 12th, or 18th of the month, your meter will be read on the first of the month. The meter read dates are listed on your bill. The change in meter read dates helps to make our billing cycles more consistent with one another. Members can expect to receive additional information in the future if their read date is changing. If you have any questions about your meter read date or the changes to the bill, please feel free to call our office at 800-445-4840.

Current billing			New billing*		
Read date	Bill date	Due date	Read date	Bill date	Due date
1st	5th	25th	1st	5th	25th
6th	10th	30th	1st	9th	29th
12th	20th	10th	1st	9th	29th
18th	25th	15th	1st	12th	2nd

\* Billing dates may fluctuate because of weekends and holidays.

### CONTACT

800-445-4840  
FAX: 419-257-3024

### WEBSITE

[www.hwe.coop](http://www.hwe.coop)

### OFFICE

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P.O. Box 190  
North Baltimore, Ohio 45872-0190

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

**Gene Barker**  
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**Duane Fry**  
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**Lee Anne Dierksheide**  
Assistant Secretary/Treasurer

**Tim Phillips**

**Ed Crawford**

**Charles Beagle**

**Ron Riegle**

**Brian Terry**

### Bill Barnhart

President and CEO

### PAYMENT OPTIONS

online, dropbox, office, by phone, or automatic bill pay

### HAVE A STORY SUGGESTION?

Email your ideas to:  
[leslie.guisinger@hwe.coop](mailto:leslie.guisinger@hwe.coop)

Members First!   
**HANCOCK-WOOD**  
**ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE**  
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 