

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO

The co-op community

Tradition and pride create effective outage restoration teams. When a big storm knocks out power for you and your neighbors, there's a good chance help is already on the way from electric cooperatives near and far.

That lightning-fast response comes from a combination of a centuries-old co-op tradition, the latest in weather-forecasting technology, a cooperative contract between electric cooperatives and municipal utilities, and lineworkers' spirit of dedication, pride, and adventure.

When a power outage is caused by an especially severe natural disaster, the devastation can be more than your local electric co-op can quickly repair on its own. That's when other co-ops swoop in, from next door and sometimes, from other states.

Perhaps you've seen them. They arrive in caravans of utility vehicles with military-like precision as part of a plan called a mutual aid agreement.

Helping hands are standing by

Through a mutual aid agreement, electric cooperative line crews from any co-op can arrive on the scene, ready to lend helping hands after disaster strikes.

A simple, one-page contract

When electric co-ops were formed in the 1930s, they based mutual aid agreements on the principle of "Cooperation Among Cooperatives," and used a handshake-style working arrangement. But in the 1990s, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) requested a more legalistic accounting for the aid it provided to electric cooperatives after natural disasters.

So electric co-ops, represented by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), got together with FEMA and the organization for city-owned utilities, the American Public Power Association, and produced a stunningly short contract — it's exactly one page long. The contract says when one co-op goes to help another, it will charge reasonable rates for the crews and equipment.

The simplicity of that arrangement fits the tradition of co-ops cooperating with each other. It is a natural extension of who we are, here in Ohio and across the country. Helping each other is something we do naturally as part of our co-op family and our culture.

The response to your power outage can start days before it even happens, with co-ops tracking weather patterns. They organize themselves under their state associations, planning for how many line crews might be needed and where they will come from — and even making hotel reservations to house crews. Ohio's Electric Cooperatives, the statewide services organization for the 24 Ohio electric co-ops, coordinates mutual aid efforts, whether needed here or provided to another state.

In addition to the careful planning and procedures, there's another secret ingredient to why co-ops come together in a crisis so effectively — the lineworkers. When they head out to a storm-ravaged area, it's with a serious kind of excitement as they prepare to use their skills for a cause they passionately believe in — restoring electricity. This is what we do. We get the lights back on.



George Walton
PRESIDENT & CEO



Think Energy Smart with Bruce

New technology is being introduced to us all the time. While product choices create new opportunities for us as consumers, wading through all the information to decide if a product will meet our

expectations can be cumbersome. Today I am sharing some new information that HWE is providing through our website to help our members decide if an electric vehicle is a good option for them.

Hancock Wood has recently added an electric vehicle calculator to our website. This calculator allows users to compare the fuel costs of using a gasoline vehicle versus several plug-in electric vehicles. The link to the calculator is found toward the bottom of the www.hwe.coop homepage.

If you use the electric vehicle calculator, you will see there are financial savings that can be captured by driving an electric vehicle for daily commutes. A long trip with an

electric vehicle will take considerably more planning to find charging stations, but in most cases is possible.

If you decide to purchase or you already own an electric vehicle, HWE offers guidance to our members to help you to set up a charging schedule to avoid charging your vehicle during peak times, which helps keep electric rates as low as possible. Please contact me at bruce@hwe.coop or 419-257-5025 for assistance.



Get to know the Hancock-Wood Board of Trustees

Each month, we will feature one of the 10 trustees from our board to help our members learn more about who represents their district on the co-op board of trustees.



Member-owners of Hancock-Wood have a voice in the service they receive, and trustees represent the member voice. One way a member can exercise their ownership in the cooperative is by expressing opinions and concerns to your trustee representative. The Hancock-Wood Board of Trustees typically meets once per month to establish basic business policies and rates.

Lee Anne Dierksheide

Lee Anne Dierksheide is the current District 3 trustee serving portions of Wood, Sandusky, and Hancock counties. Dierksheide has been a trustee for a little more than one year, and she is retired from the United States Postal Service. In her free time, she is a member of the Bowling Green Area Community Band, but due to COVID-19, they have not been able to meet and are awaiting a time to resume rehearsals. She also enjoys attending her grandkids' sporting events. Dierksheide says, "I enjoy working with the other board members and meeting many great HWE staff members. At the training courses in Columbus, I gained so much valuable information about what it means to be a board member and the electric utility business."



HANCOCK-WOOD ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE SCHOLARSHIP

Scholarship Criteria

- The applicant must be a member of the Hancock-Wood Electric Cooperative; the son, daughter or ward of a member of Hancock-Wood and living at that person's home; an adult living on Hancock-Wood's lines; or the son, daughter or ward of a person living on Hancock-Wood's lines and must reside with that person.
- New students must have a minimum 2.75 high school cumulative GPA.
- Continuing students must have a minimum 2.75 cumulative GPA.
- Must be a United States citizen.
- Cannot receive tuition reimbursement through an employer.

*Verification form must be completed when selected

Step One:

Visit the Owens website at <https://owens.academicworks.com/>

Step Two:

Click the online application link and sign in to submit your application

Step Three:

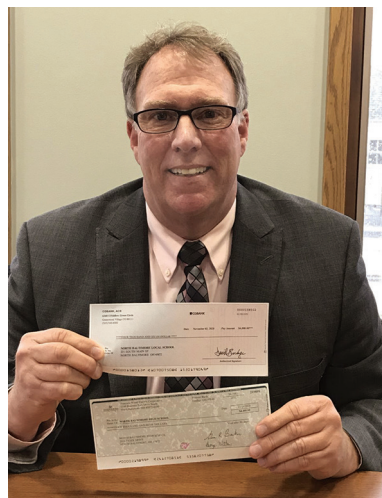
Sign in periodically to complete follow-ups, if prompted

Priority deadline to apply: March 1, 2021

For more information, email scholarships@owens.edu
or call the Foundation Office at 567-661-7603.

Sharing for Success helps fund school projects

Every year Hancock-Wood and Prism Propane take part in the Sharing for Success grant program. CoBank offers a matching grant for a local organization, up to \$10,000. With these matching dollars, Hancock-Wood was able to give organizations a total of \$20,000, and Prism Propane granted a total of \$12,000. This year, we chose to focus our efforts on the local schools that have been directly impacted by the COVID-19 virus. North Baltimore Local Schools received \$8,000 to help fund a new bus. Lakota Local Schools was awarded \$6,000 for their accelerated reading program and individual counseling for students in need. McComb Local Schools was awarded \$6,000 to help fund laptops for students to take home for online learning. Liberty-Benton was awarded \$6,000 for a digital dismissal program. Leipsic Local Schools received \$6,000 to help fund technology resources needed for long-distance learning. Each year, a different organization is selected for the grant, and there are no project restrictions. Many organizations use this opportunity to apply grant money toward something they may have been putting off purchasing due to insufficient funding.



North Baltimore Superintendent Ryan Delaney is shown with the school's checks to help fund a new bus for the school.

Operation Round Up grants fourth quarter funding to local nonprofits

The Community Trust Fund board granted just over \$43,000 to the following organizations:

Arlington Local Schools	Pemberville American Legion
Bloomdale Fire and Rescue	Putnam County YMCA
Findlay Hope House	Vanlue Fire
Hancock Parks Foundation	Washington Township Fire
North Baltimore Schools	

Through the members who donate by rounding up their bill each month, we are able to make a large impact to these and other organizations in our service area. If you know of an organization in need of funding, have them contact us or go to our website for more information. The next grant deadline is April 19, 2021.



Putnam County YMCA's executive director and aquatics director were approved for a grant for the second-grade swim program.

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online, dropbox, office, by phone, or
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HAVE A STORY SUGGESTION?

Email your ideas to:
leslie.guisinger@hwe.coop

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