

SOUTHEAST ELECTRIC Cooperative



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Co-ops powered by purpose

By **TYE WILLIAMS** | Manager,
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THIS month electric cooperatives across the country take time to celebrate National Co-op Month and reflect on the unique advantages of being part of a cooperative. It's also the perfect time to thank you — the members who make it all possible. For us, it's not just a celebration. It's a chance to reaffirm the values that guide everything we do.

As the CEO of Southeast Electric Cooperative, I see purpose in action every single day. Unlike investor-owned utilities, our co-op doesn't exist to make profits for distant shareholders. We exist to serve you — our members, our neighbors and our communities. That purpose is what sets us apart. It's why we were founded, and it's what continues to drive every decision we make.

At its core, being a cooperative means we are member-owned and locally controlled. That's not just a tagline; it's the very heart of our business model. Members have a voice in how our co-op operates. You elect board members who live right here in



our service area and understand the unique challenges and opportunities our communities face. Decisions aren't made in corporate boardrooms hundreds of miles away; they're made here at home, by people who care about the same

things you do.

This local accountability means we can stay focused on what matters most: delivering reliable, affordable electricity and providing real value to the people we serve.

We do that by investing in essential infrastructure upgrades and technologies that strengthen our local grid and improve electric service. We work hard to manage costs and keep rates as low as possible — because we know how much rising prices affect families and small businesses in our area. And when storms hit or outages occur, Southeast Electric crews are here and ready to respond quickly, because we live here too.

But our commitment doesn't end at the powerlines.

Co-ops were built to meet community needs, and that purpose extends well beyond delivering electricity.

Whether we're supporting local schools, sponsoring youth programs or partnering with volunteer organizations, we are always looking for ways to improve the quality of life in the places we serve. Community support isn't an afterthought — it's part of our mission.

We're also planning for the future. As electricity demand grows due to new technologies and economic development, electric co-ops are working to ensure we continue to meet those needs with a balanced, reliable energy mix. We know our members care about affordability and dependability, and we're committed to delivering both.

That's the power of the cooperative difference. That's what it means to be powered by purpose.

This National Co-op Month, I encourage you to take pride in your cooperative membership. You're not just a customer — you're an owner, a stakeholder, and a vital part of a larger effort to keep our community strong, connected and energized.

Thank you for the trust you place in us. We're proud to be your local electric cooperative. RM



DON'T FORGET

SMARTHUB the on-line bill payment system is now available. It is convenient and easy!



Why call 811 before your outdoor project?

MOST of us never think about the electric, gas, water and other utility lines buried below the ground, but hitting one of these lines while digging is not the reminder you'll want — trust us! Southeast Electric Cooperative reminds all members who are planning a digging project to call 811 at least three business days before you start. Or you can submit a request online by visiting <https://www.montana811.org>.

Here's how the process works:

After you call 811 or submit your request online, all affected utilities will be notified of your intent to dig. It may take the utilities a few days to get to your request, so please be patient. The affected utilities will send someone out to mark the buried lines with paint or flags. Before you break ground, confirm that all the utilities have responded to your request. If you placed your request by phone, use the process explained by your 811 call center representative. If



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**

you submitted your request online, refer to your 811 center ticket to confirm everything.

By taking this important step before you break ground on your project, you can help protect not only yourself but our community. Disrupting an underground utility line can interrupt service, cause injuries and cost money to repair, so remember to call 811 first and know what's below. RM

Dress up with care for

HALLOWEEN

**When dressing up little ones (or yourself)
keep these safety tips in mind:**

- Always wear costumes that are labeled flame resistant.
- Wear bright, reflective costumes or add strips of reflective tape to improve visibility.
- Do not wear decorative (colored) contact lenses unless you have seen an eyecare professional.
- Wear makeup and hats rather than costume masks that can obscure or obstruct your vision.
- Test the makeup you plan to use in advance for a possible allergy.



== HONOR COURAGE SACRIFICE ==
FIRST RESPONDERS DAY



THANK YOU!

October 28th is National First Responders Day. All of us at Southeast Electric Cooperative would like to thank those in our communities that dedicate their time and talents to keep us safe. You are all appreciated.