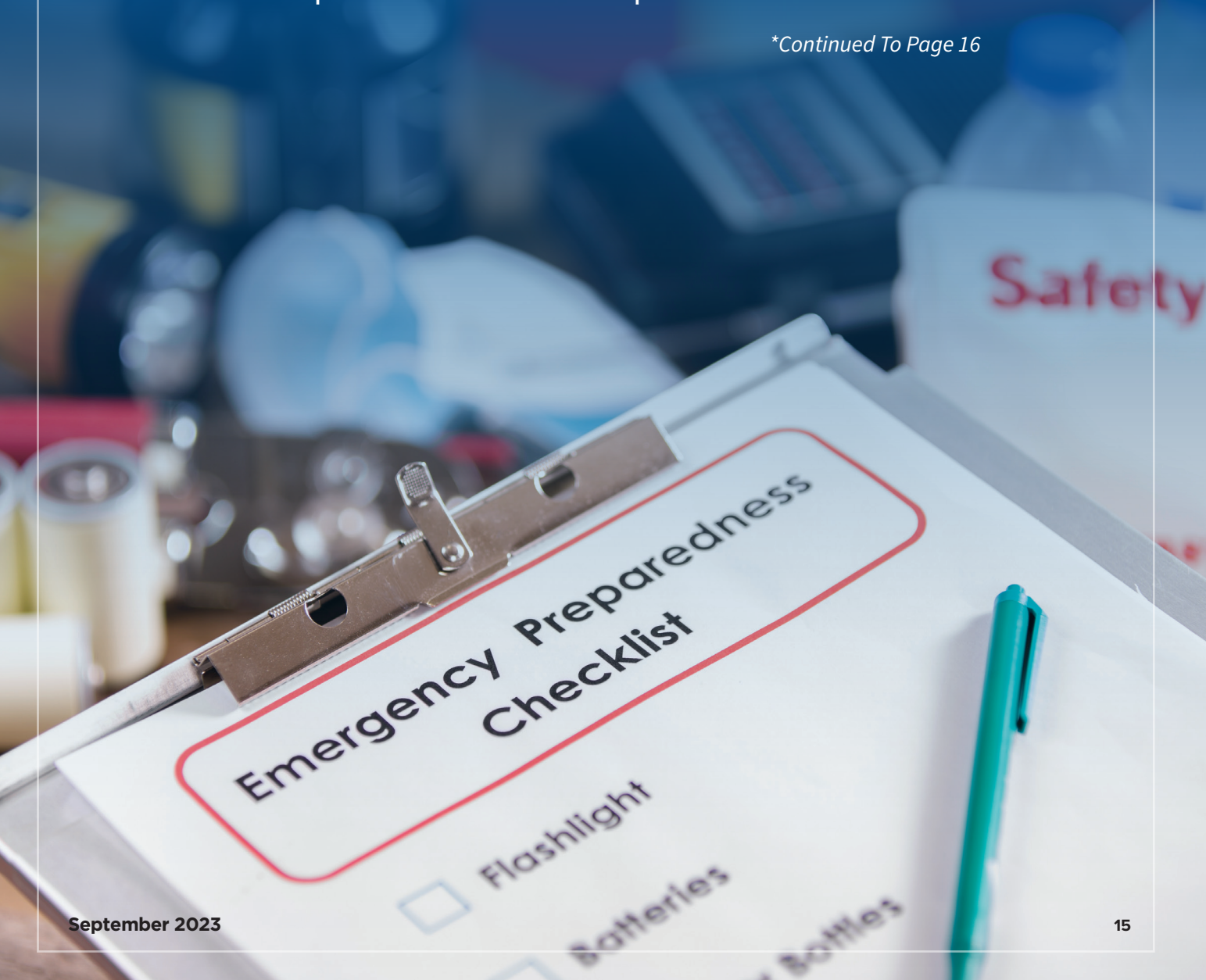


WHAT'S YOUR EMERGENCY PLAN?

As we mark **National Disaster Preparedness Month** in September, now is the perfect time to get ready for a predicted — or an unexpected — disaster.

**Continued To Page 16*



Emergency Preparedness
Checklist

☐ Flashlight

☐ Batteries



Riding out the Storm

WHAT'S YOUR EMERGENCY PLAN?

Many of us will never forget Winter Storm Frida, and some of us remember hurricanes or tropical storms from long ago. Regardless, all of us can likely look back at a time we lost power and wished we had been more prepared.

As we enter peak hurricane season, there is no better time to take action and prepare your family and your home for the potential of a major storm and resulting power outages.

September is National Preparedness Month and REC urges you to take that to heart.

Where to Start

Talk to your family well in advance of any potential major storm. Review evacuation plans. Do you have an alternate place to stay? Then, together begin the process of gathering essential items you might need during a long-term power outage.

Also visit KnowYourZoneVA.org to find your correct evacuation zone.

What to Keep on Hand



CASH



WATER



FIRST-AID
KIT



Find a complete
storm-prep check list:



NONPERISHABLE
FOOD



CAN OPENER



Watch? Warning? Know the Difference.

A **watch** means conditions are possible for a hurricane, tropical storm, etc., in a stated area. Experts often announce watches 48 hours before they expect major storm-related impacts to start.

A **warning** is more serious. It means dangerous conditions are expected. Experts issue these warnings 36 hours before tropical-storm-force winds are expected in the area to give people enough time to prepare for the storm.

Downed Power Lines are Downright Dangerous!

What to Know:

If you see a downed power line, move at least 35 feet away from the line and anything touching it.

If you see someone who is in contact with a downed line, do not touch the person — you could become the next victim. Call 911 and REC at 800-552-3904 immediately. Even if you have a nonmetal object nearby, do not attempt to move a downed power line or anything in contact with

the line. Even these nonconductive materials like wood or cloth, if slightly wet, can conduct electricity and then electrocute you.

Don't drive over downed power lines. If a power line comes down on your car, or you didn't see the line until driving into it, stay in your car. Tell others to stay away from your vehicle. If you must leave your car, jump out of the vehicle with both feet together, avoiding contact with the car and ground at the same time. Keep your feet together and shuffle away from the car.

REC Board Amends Bylaws

At the June Board meeting the Board of Directors voted to approve amended Bylaws. Some of the amendments were minimal and included changes that updated the bylaw language for consistency and clarity, while also ensuring the Cooperative can successfully conduct business today.

Other changes were more significant, and included introducing provisions that were not previously found in the Bylaws. A summary of these changes is below:

- Article 1, Section 6: A new category for a Suspension of membership was added. This change defines what it means for a member to be, or to not be, in good standing. In good standing means a member is meeting all applicable financial obligations, not violating Cooperative's governing documents, or causing an imminent threat. And, it also explains that when a membership is suspended, certain member rights may be suspended until the member is again in good standing.
- Article 3, Sections 2 and 4: The amendment focused on consistency, making the number of members required to call a special meeting of the membership the same as that required to constitute a quorum, which is 2.5% of active members. The prior version of the Bylaws required 500 members to petition for a special meeting. That number had not been changed in many years, and equated to just 0.03% of the membership. With this case, the threshold is 2.5% of members in good standing and 1/9 participation of the members per Board region.
- Article 4, Section 2a: The Board of Directors is given the flexibility to have between 9 to 13 Board members. As such, your Board can potentially add up to 4 at-large directors to better represent the Cooperative membership.
- Article 4, Section 3: Clarifications were made to the Qualifications for a Board member. These qualifications include being a bona fide resident of the region, having a primary residence in the region, receiving electric service from REC for at least 2 years, being a member in good standing. It also clarified that Board members can't be past REC employees, general counsel or the spouse of a past employee or general counsel, can't currently be an elected official, and further must agree to abide by the Board's confidentiality and standards of conduct.
- Article 4, Section 12: Clarifies the Board's authority to create committees, including advisory committees. The amendments also added a Board Risk Committee focused on protecting the Cooperative through effective risk oversight.

REC and your Board of Directors are focused on transparency. The amended Bylaws are accessible to all member-owners anytime on the Governance and Document Center on the Cooperative's website myrec.coop.



Curious About **Solar** Power?

The benefits of installing rooftop solar panels may seem like a no-brainer, but the reality is, not every home (and homeowner's situation) is always right for solar.

Here are **seven questions to consider** before installing rooftop solar panels.

- 1. Is my roof suitable for solar?** Your roof should be in good condition before installing solar panels. If your roof is old and in poor shape, it may need to be replaced before panels can be mounted. Additionally, your roof should receive a lot of sun to make the most of a rooftop system. Consider how much sun (and shade) the roof receives and if any trees will need to be removed. Solar panels perform best when facing south, so keep this in mind as you think about where the panels will be mounted.
- 2. How long will I own the home?** If you're considering rooftop solar, you're likely planning to stay in the home for several years. But if you plan to sell the home at some point down the road, consider that not all potential buyers will want to maintain a rooftop solar system. If you enter a contract to lease the system, review the terms and what those mean if you decide to sell the property.
- 3. Lease or purchase?** Purchasing a rooftop solar system outright is expensive, which is why many homeowners opt to lease their solar panels. However, federal tax credits can help cover some of the costs for a new system, up to 30%. Regardless, make sure you get several quotes from qualified contractors.



Speaking of contractors, there are several factors you'll want to discuss with them upfront.

4. Can the contractor provide up-to-date documentation?

It may seem obvious but be sure to request proof and documentation of the contractor's licensing, permitting and other credentials. Comb through company reviews, check the contractor's status with the Better Business Bureau, etc. — do your homework on the front end before signing a contract.

5. Does the contract seem reasonable and fair?

If you decide to hire a contractor to install rooftop solar, carefully read the fine print of the contract. Do the system performance calculations seem realistic? Does the project timeframe sound reasonable? Negotiate the contract to fit your goals and needs.

6. Who will maintain the solar panels?

Determining who is responsible for maintaining the solar panels will depend on who owns the system. If you lease the system from a solar installer, it may be their responsibility. Periodically, solar panels need to be cleaned as dirt and debris can impact panel productivity. Parts may also need to be replaced, so it's important to know who will take on these responsibilities.

7. How will I work with REC? Finally, but equally important, you should contact REC if you decide to install solar. The system must be connected to the electric grid, so you'll need to sign an interconnection agreement. We can walk you through the steps, including how our solar rates and fees work. Visit myrec.coop/solar for a general overview of how you can work with us on connecting your new rooftop solar system.

As with any major home project, do plenty of research upfront, and contact REC if you have questions or decide to move forward with installation. We're your local energy partner and can serve as a helpful resource throughout the process.



Cooperative Sunshare: Solar Made Simple

If your main goal is to use renewable energy and help the environment, consider signing up for Cooperative Sunshare, our community solar program. You can help power renewable energy without having to invest and maintain a home system.

With Cooperative Sunshare, there's no hassle, no up-front fees and no equipment to install.

It's just that simple.



Learn more:
myrec.coop/solar



It's a Bird, It's a Plane, It's a New Tool to Improve Reliability!

REC teams continue to reach new heights in their efforts to provide reliable power for all member-owners.

In recent weeks, REC has partnered with a contractor to provide a birds-eye view of electric poles. By using the unmanned aerial systems (UAS), more commonly known as drones, REC is able to reduce the pole inspection time by half, said Mike Jacobson, System Inspections Administrator.

"The benefit to members is we are trying to find issues before they could potentially cause a power outage," Jacobson said. "We always try to address any issues before they have a chance to cause an outage."

REC has more than 180,000 poles, supporting more than 18,000 miles of line. That's the distance of three round trips from Louisa County to Los Angeles.

What to Expect

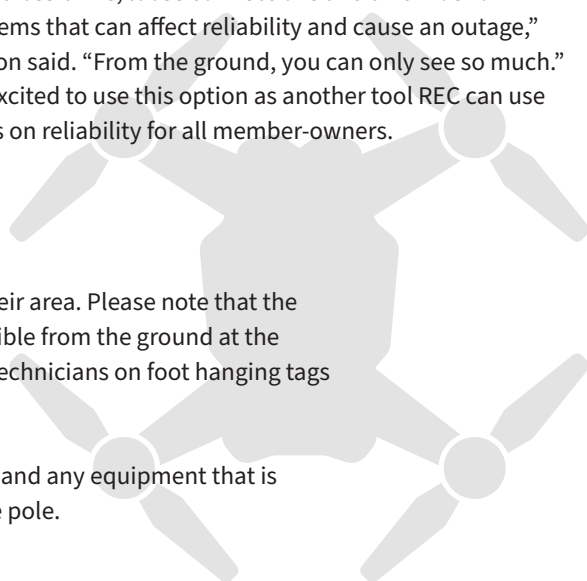
REC will notify members when the aerial inspections are scheduled in their area. Please note that the operator may be a distance from the aerial system, which may not be visible from the ground at the specific location where the inspection is taking place. You may also see technicians on foot hanging tags on the poles.

The drones that are flying around the poles are focused only on the pole and any equipment that is attached to that pole. The drone will fly in a 360-degree circle around the pole.

By using UAS platforms for aerial inspections, Jacobson said: "We're able to inspect about 20% of poles system-wide, each year." That's about 37,000 poles.

Plus, the aerial footage reveals details that otherwise might go unnoticed.

"We're looking at everything from a leaking transformer, broken cross-arms, loose connections and a number of other items that can affect reliability and cause an outage," Jacobson said. "From the ground, you can only see so much." We're excited to use this option as another tool REC can use to focus on reliability for all member-owners.



Clearing the Way for Power You Can Count on Vegetation Management Plays Critical Role

In the dead of winter or the sweltering days of summer, they roll into rights-of-way. (They work all the various weather days in between, too.) Their jobs are dangerous and grueling, and often require trekking through difficult terrain and carrying specialized equipment.

But they know the work they do means that you, REC's member-owners, are less likely to experience a power outage.

REC's foresters and their critical contractor partners work together each year to keep rights-of-way clear and electricity flowing for you, the Cooperative's member-owners.

Each year, the teams:

- **Remove more than 25,000 hazard trees**
- **Clear about 1,500 miles of right-of-way**

"REC is incredibly fortunate to have not only skilled Vegetation Management staff, but also dedicated contractors who work together to keep the lights on," said Cindy Musick, Director of Vegetation Management Services. "If you see them in your community, we hope you recognize how vital they are to caring for the electric grid. We are so grateful for their efforts."



WANT TO GET DOWN?

REC's prices are going down ... about \$5 a month for an average household's use. The cost of power has decreased, and REC is passing the savings along to you.

Every decrease helps, and there are ways to take your bill down further:



Keep your shades down and hot sun out.



If using your AC, keep windows down except during cool morning hours.



There's no downside to using a programmable thermostat to gradually cool your home in summer and gradually heat it in winter.

So, go ahead and make a splash with lower prices! Enjoy a refreshing adjustment.





Excited for Hunting Season? Put Safety First.

REC recognizes that many member-owners have been looking forward to hunting season, but we encourage you to remember the importance of putting safety first.

That includes being aware of electrical equipment and taking necessary precautions. Shooting at utility facilities is very dangerous and jeopardizes the safe power delivery for all member-owners. In Virginia, it is also a felony.

As you enjoy the great outdoors this fall, please make safety your top priority:

- **Take notice** of posted warning signs and keep clear of electrical equipment.
- **Do not shoot** at or near utility facilities — wires, poles and insulators.
- **Know where** power lines and equipment are located on the land where you hunt.
- **Be especially careful** in wooded areas where power lines may not be as visible.
- **Do not place** deer stands on utility poles or climb poles. Energized lines and equipment can conduct electricity to anyone who comes in contact with them, causing shock or electrocution.
- **Do not place** decoys on power lines or other utility equipment. Any nonelectrical equipment attached to a pole can pose an obstruction and serious hazards for REC line crews.

For more safety tips from REC, visit: myrec.coop/safety.

ENERGY Efficiency: Time for a Tune-up!

Did you know fall is the perfect time to schedule a tune-up for your heating system? Home heating accounts for a large portion of winter energy bills, and no matter what kind of system you have, you can save energy and money by regularly maintaining your equipment. Combining proper equipment maintenance and upgrades with recommended insulation, air sealing and thermostat settings **can save about 30% on your energy bills.**



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Region VIII



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Region IX

Local Pages Editor – Casey M. Hollins, CCC
Staff Writer – Brian Baer
Designer – Justice Newkirk

Contact Information:
P.O. Box 7388
Fredericksburg, VA 22404
800.552.3904 | office@myrec.coop

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