



A Change For The Better

It’s the little things

When it comes to energy efficiency in the home, sometimes small changes can make a big impact. A small, unglamorous task like changing the filters on your HVAC system makes your unit run more efficiently – keeping your house cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter. It also saves money. And the savings gained from having your system run more efficiently can be applied to more fun or entertaining pursuits that your family can enjoy together.

The lowdown on dirt

As you move around your home, you drive dust into the air from carpets, furniture and drapes. Regardless of where it comes from, dust and dirt trapped in a system’s air filter leads to several problems, including:

- Reduced air flow in the home and up to 15 percent higher operating costs
- Costly duct cleaning or replacement
- Lowered system efficiency

Making the switch

Now, that you know the facts, it’s time to get busy changing or cleaning the air filter in your heating/cooling system. Many HVAC professionals recommend that you clean or change the filter on your air conditioner or furnace monthly. It’s simple and easy, and in many cases, it only takes a few minutes.

Filters are available in a variety of types and efficiencies, rated by a Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value (MERV). MERV, a method developed by the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers, tests filter effectiveness. The higher the MERV number, the higher the filter’s effectiveness at keeping dust out of your system. While most types of filters must be replaced, some filters are reusable. And don’t forget about the winter months. Your heating system needs to work as efficiently as possible to keep you and your family warm and a clean air filter helps it do just that.

Heating and cooling professionals recommend turning your system off before changing the air filter. Make sure that the arrow on the filter – which indicates the direction of the airflow – is pointing toward the blower motor. When you’ve made the change, turn your system back on.

A teachable moment

Beyond saving money and improving the air quality in your home, changing your air filter is a great opportunity to teach your family more about energy efficiency. Consider getting everyone involved, and the entire family will learn how simple changes can make a big difference.



Question for our members.....

Do you or a loved one rely on medical equipment that is supplied by electricity? If so, do you know what you will do if the lights are out for an extended length of time due to damage caused by a storm, tornado or hurricane?

Now is the time to put a backup plan in place in the event power is knocked out. We will restore power as soon as possible, but depending on the type of damage caused and where the damage may be, we cannot guarantee how long you may be affected by an outage.



Manager's Message

By: Mark A. Suggs

Safety Above All Else

“Safety” is a universal word that is mentioned often and used loosely. Communities large and small as well as companies across all industries are committed to safety. Unfortunately, when it really counts, steps to keep the public, workers, athletes and loved ones safe are often ignored in the interest of expediency or convenience.

However, safety is a serious issue, especially when it comes to electrical safety. For Pitt and Greene EMC it's a number one priority. Over time, Pitt and Greene EMC has created a culture of safety by putting our employees' safety and that of the community above all else. We strive to deliver affordable and reliable electricity to our members but equally important, we want to return our workers home safely to their loved ones. To do this requires ongoing focus, dedication and vigilance.

Following leading national safety standards

Working with electricity is an inherently dangerous job, especially for lineworkers. We establish and follow safety protocols based on leading national safety practices for the utility industry. We require our lineworkers to wear specialized equipment when working next to or with power lines. There are specific protocols that our lineworkers follow when dealing with electricity. Our safety team has regular meetings where they discuss upcoming projects from a safety perspective. They monitor and track near-misses of accidents in order to understand them, share “lessons learned” and improve in the future.

We encourage all of our crews to speak up and hold each other accountable for safety. By cultivating a culture of openness, we promote problem-solving with regard to safety, rather than defaulting to a blame game. We examine the information and data gathered from near-misses and accident reports to discern patterns and use safety metrics to improve in those areas where we have fallen short. As appropriate, we brief contractors on our safety protocols and set expectations for their engagement.

Keeping the community safe

Each year thousands of people in the United States are critically injured and electrocuted as a result of electrical fires, accidents and electrocution in their own homes. Many of these accidents are preventable. Keep yourself and your community safe around electricity.

Don't attempt electrical DIY projects or overload your outlets. Report downed power lines, and report anything that may look suspicious near substations and padmount transformers. Be mindful when it comes to electrical safety. Pause and take the extra time to plug into safety.

THE STEPS TO RESTORING power

Hurricanes and ice storms. Tornadoes and blizzards. Electric cooperative members have seen them all. And with such severe weather comes power outages. Restoring power after a major outage is a big job that involves much more than simply throwing a switch or removing a tree from a line.

The main goal is to restore power safely to the greatest number of members in the shortest time possible.

The major cause of outages is damage caused by fallen trees. That's why your electric cooperative has an ongoing right-of-way maintenance program.

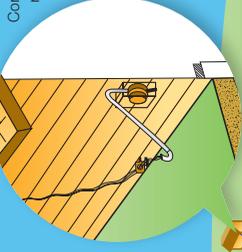
This illustration explains how power typically is restored after a major disaster.

Step 1. Transmission towers and lines supply power to one or more transmission substations. These lines seldom fail, but they can be damaged by a hurricane or tornado. Tens of thousands of people could be served by one high-voltage transmission line, so if there is damage here it gets attention first.

Step 2. A co-op may have several local distribution substations, each serving thousands of consumers. When a major outage occurs, the local distribution substations are checked first. A problem here could be caused by failure in the transmission system supplying the substation. If the problem can be corrected at the substation level, power may be restored to a large number of people.

Step 3. Main distribution supply lines are checked next if the problem cannot be isolated at the substation. These supply lines carry electricity away from the substation to a group of consumers, such as a town or housing development. When power is restored at this stage, all consumers served by this supply line could see the lights come on, as long as there is no problem farther down the line.

Step 5. Sometimes, damage will occur on the service line between your house and the transformer on the nearby pole. This can explain why you have no power when your neighbor does. Your co-op needs to know you have an outage here, so a service crew can repair it.



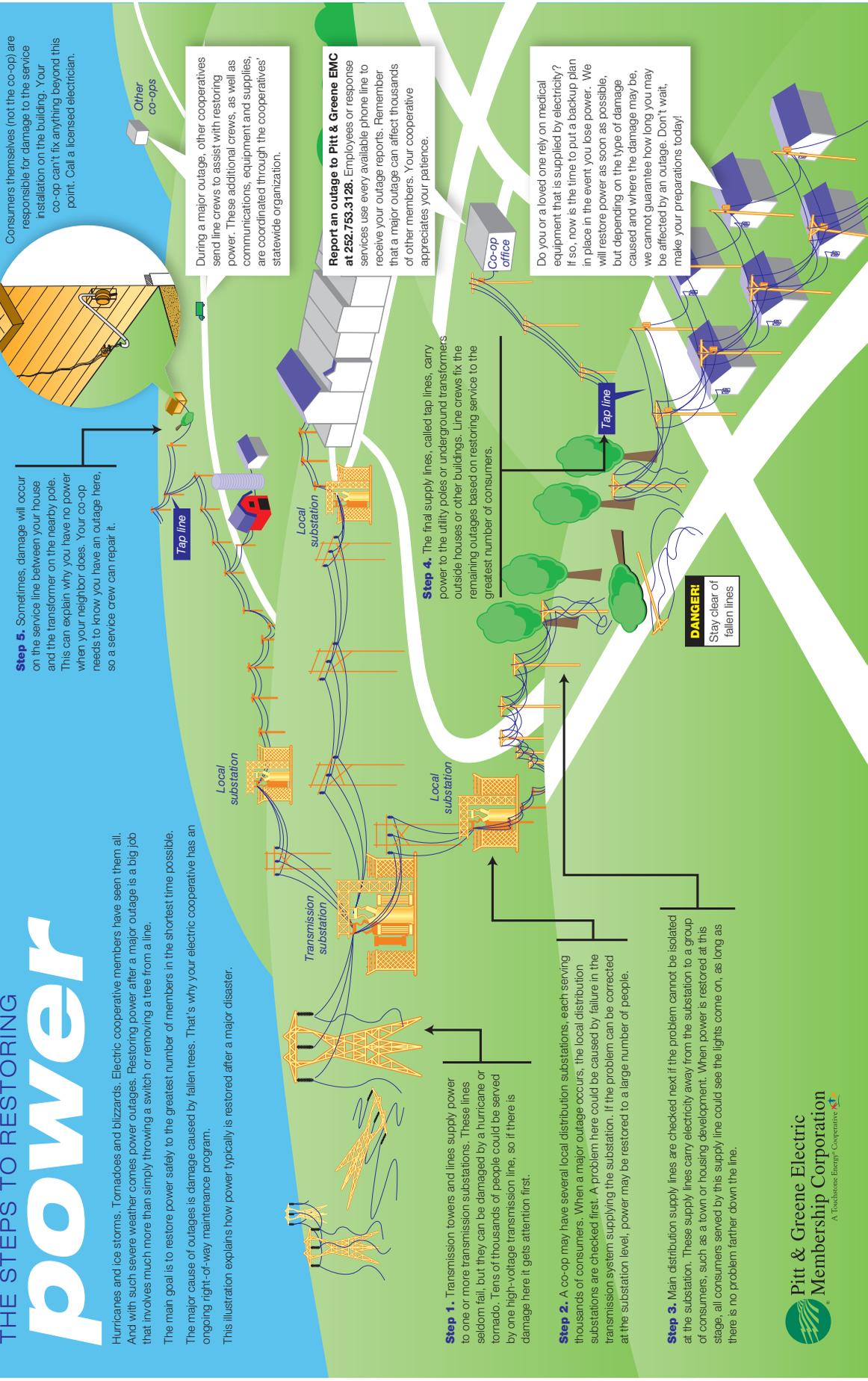
During a major outage, other cooperatives send line crews to assist with restoring power. These additional crews, as well as communications, equipment and supplies, are coordinated through the cooperatives' statewide organization.

Report an outage to Pitt & Greene EMC at 252.753.3128. Employees or response services use every available phone line to receive your outage reports. Remember that a major outage can affect thousands of other members. Your cooperative appreciates your patience.

Do you or a loved one rely on medical equipment that is supplied by electricity? If so, now is the time to put a backup plan in place in the event you lose power. We will restore power as soon as possible, but depending on the type of damage caused and where the damage may be, we cannot guarantee how long you may be affected by an outage. Don't wait, make your preparations today!

Step 4. The final supply lines, called tap lines, carry power to the utility poles or underground transformers outside houses or other buildings. Line crews fix the remaining outages based on restoring service to the greatest number of consumers.

DANGER!
Stay clear of fallen lines.



Avoid High Summer Electric Bills

Don't let warmer weather turn into "summertime blues" when your monthly electric bill arrives. Following are some energy-saving tips.

Adjust the thermostat. During warmer months, raising the thermostat a few degrees can save money. Set the temperature between 78-80 degrees Fahrenheit, and you could save up to 8 percent on monthly cooling bills. Programmable thermostats make it easy to save by offering four pre-programmed settings to regulate a home's temperature throughout the year.

Be a "fan-atic." While they don't replace air conditioners or heat pumps, fans move air and help you feel more comfortable. On milder days, fans can save as much as 60 percent on electric bills. Fans cool people, not rooms, so turn them off when you leave.

Regular maintenance is essential. Have your HVAC systems serviced annually by a NATE (North American Technician Excellence)-certified technician. This HVAC professional will check your entire system to make sure it runs efficiently. This will help extend the life of the system and save money.

When it's time to replace your cooling system, TogetherWeSave.com recommends replacing it with an ENERGY STAR-qualified model. Doing so will reduce your energy costs. Bigger isn't always better. Too often, cooling equipment isn't sized properly and leads to higher electric bills. A unit that's too large for your home will not cool evenly and might produce higher humidity indoors.

Instead of getting burned this summer by high energy bills, visit www.energysavers.gov OR Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives energy-saving website, www.TogetherWeSave.com, for more money-saving ideas.

Stay safe exploring the outdoors this Summer

Summer is in full swing, and that means it is time for fun in the sun! As you find yourself spending more time outdoors, Pitt & Greene EMC reminds you to stay safe. These are just a few tips to remember when you are spending time outdoors this summer with your family. Have some fun out there, and always keep safety in mind!

* Children should never climb trees near power lines, always assume a wire is live. Fly kites and remote controlled-airplanes in large open areas like a park or a field, safely away from trees and overhead power lines.

* Planning to take a dip in the pool? Electrical devices, such as stereos, should be kept at least 10 feet away from water sources, and outdoor electrical outlets should always be covered. If you hear a rumble of thunder, exit the pool right away.

* Speaking of thunder, summer storms can be dangerous if you're caught in the wrong place at the wrong time. If you find yourself outdoors during a storm, move toward suitable shelter with covered sides, and stick to low-lying ground if possible.

De lunes a viernes de 8:00 a.m. a 5:00 p.m.
252-753-3128 / 1-800-622-1362 / 252-747-7600

CORTES DE SUMINISTRO ELÉCTRICO Y EMERGENCIAS:
Durante fines de semana, días festivos y después del horario de oficina
252-753-8778

Co-op Office Hours
Monday - Friday - 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
252-753-3128 / 1-800-622-1362 / 252-747-7600

POWER OUTAGES & EMERGENCIAS
During weekends, holidays and after office hours
252-753-8778