

BARC News



CEO Mike Keyser

Keyser's Corner

Autocue and the Importance of Up-to-Date Information on Your Electric Account

We are a service company that happens to sell electricity, broadband and solar. Because of that mindset, we are always looking to improve our operational efficiency so we can better serve our consumers. For a while now, we have been working on a new tool to resolve phone-capacity issues we face intaking outage reports during widespread power outages.

We are thrilled to implement our new Autocue system that will allow greater ease in reporting power outages by phone, and provides a new method for making electric payments as well. When consumers call in a power outage, they can now report the outage using this automated system without having to wait to speak with a customer service team member or after-hours agent (of course, we still offer outage reporting through the

BARC app, available for both Apple and Android phones).

Whether it is to report a power outage or pay a bill by credit card using Autocue, you will need to provide your electric account number that is associated with your electric service address. Additional instructions for how to use Autocue are included in the magazine.

Since Autocue interfaces with both our customer information and outage management systems, the only way this tool will be effective is if we have up-to-date contact information and service (911) address. When you call to report an outage, the account number you enter in the Autocue system will reference our systems to produce a service address. If this address is incorrect, is blank, or has just a descriptor such as "well," "house," etc., Autocue will not be able to accurately log your outage to alert BARC that there is a problem. Autocue will only be as good as the data we have, and I know for a fact we do not have 100% accurate service addresses for every meter location today. Some are mailing addresses and some are just descriptors.

Accurate service addresses also help our outage management system predict the location and possible cause of an outage, making it faster and easier for our crews to correct the problem.

We need the help of our consumers to update our records! Please review your electric billing statement and pay attention to the "Location Address" box at the top

right of your billing statement. Also take a moment to confirm your phone number on your statement. Please contact us at 800-846-2272, Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., to update any incorrect information associated with your electric account.

I want to emphasize that in providing your contact information to the co-op, we will never share this information with any third parties. It is only used by BARC to send important electric-related news and information to you.

While we always do our best to maintain service, we occasionally plan outages to update, repair or replace equipment. In these instances, we can provide advance notification to affected consumers through phone messages, text messages or email, if we have your updated contact information and communication preferences. Keeping the co-op updated with your information also helps us when there's a question about energy use or billing.

Many of you have been members of the co-op for years, and it's likely your account information hasn't been updated for some time. We recognize that many members now use a cellphone as their primary phone service, and we might not have that number in our system.

By keeping your contact information up-to-date, you will be helping us improve service and efficiency so we can better serve you and all members of the co-op.

BARC ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

P.O. Box 264
Millboro, VA 24460-0264
1-800-846-2272

Office Hours: M-F, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
barcelectric.com
barconnects.net

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Chief Executive Officer
Michael Keyser

BARC Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

BARC's New AUTOCUE SYSTEM



YOU CAN NOW REPORT POWER OUTAGES
AND MAKE CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS ON YOUR ELECTRIC ACCOUNT



REPORT A POWER OUTAGE

Call **800-846-2272** and choose **Option 1** from your phone.
At the next prompt, choose **Option 1** again - this will direct you to Autocue.

You must enter your electric account number to report a power outage

The service address will be read back to you. If it is incorrect, contact BARC Customer Service during regular business hours to correct it. *It is important we have your correct service address on file to accurately log outages*

Once in Autocue: Choose Option 3 to report a power outage



CHECK YOUR BALANCE/MAKE AN ELECTRIC ACCOUNT PAYMENT

Call **800-846-2272** and choose **Option 1** from your phone.
At the next prompt, choose **Option 1** again - this will direct you to Autocue.

Once in Autocue, you can:

Choose Option 1 to hear your account balance

Choose Option 2 to pay your electric account balance -

Enter your account number to pay your account

The service address will be read back to you. If it is incorrect, contact BARC Customer Service during regular business hours to update it. *It is important we have your correct service address on file to ensure accurate payment*

If correct, continue and you will be prompted to enter your payment amount and payment method information

**QUESTIONS? CONTACT BARC CUSTOMER SERVICE
800-846-2272**

Three Easy DIY Projects to Save Energy

Winter weather can have a big impact on your energy bills, hitting your pockets a little harder than you would have liked. Now that spring is just around the corner, it's the perfect time to tackle a few DIY efficiency projects for your home. The good news: You don't have to be an energy expert to do this!

There are several easy ways to save energy, but if you're willing to take a hands-on approach, here are three projects you can do now to start saving.

Make the Most of Your Water Heater

Let's start with one of the easiest projects: insulating your water heater. Insulating a water heater that's warm to the touch can save 7 to 16% annually on your water-heating bills. It should also be noted that if your water heater is new, it is likely already insulated. But if your water heater is warm to the touch, it needs additional insulation.

You can purchase a pre-cut jacket or blanket for about \$20. You'll also need two people for this project. Before you start, turn off the water heater. Wrap the blanket around the water heater and tape it to temporarily keep it in place. If necessary, use a marker to note the areas where the controls are so you can cut them out. Once the blanket is positioned correctly tape it permanently in place, then turn the water heater back on. If you have an electric water heater, do not set the thermostat above 130 degrees, which can cause overheating.

Seal Air Leaks with Caulk

The average American family spends \$2,000 annually on energy bills, but unfortunately, much of that money is wasted through air leaks in the home. Applying caulk around windows, doors, electrical wiring and plumbing can save energy and money. There are many different types of caulking compounds available, but the most popular choice is silicone. Silicone caulk is waterproof, flexible and won't shrink or crack.

Before applying new caulk, clean and remove any old caulk or paint with a putty knife, screwdriver, brush or solvent. The area should be dry before you apply the new caulk.

Apply the caulk in one continuous stream, and make sure it sticks to both sides of the crack or seam. Afterwards, use a putty knife to smooth out the caulk, then wipe the surface with a dry cloth.

Weatherstrip Exterior Doors

One of the best ways to seal air leaks is to weatherstrip exterior doors, which can keep out drafts and help you control energy costs. Weather stripping materials vary, but you can ask your local hardware or home store for assistance if you're unsure about the supplies you need.

When choosing weather stripping materials, make sure it can withstand

temperature changes, friction and the general "wear and tear" for the location of the door. Keep in mind, you will need separate materials for the door sweep (at the bottom of the door) and the top and sides.

Before applying the new weather stripping, clean the moulding with water and soap, then let the area dry completely. Measure each side of the door, then cut the weather stripping to fit each section. Make sure the weather stripping fits snugly against both surfaces so it compresses when the door is closed.

By completing these simple efficiency projects, you can save energy (and money!) while increasing the comfort level of your home. And you can impress your family and friends with your savvy energy-saving skills.



SOURCE: RARE FORM PROPERTIES

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME REMINDER

Don't forget to spring forward on March 8! Set your clocks forward by one hour.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Placing hot food in the refrigerator makes the appliance work harder than necessary, using more energy. Allow food to cool down before you place it in the fridge.



Tina Glenn

TINA'S TASTINGS

SPOON BURGERS

- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 small onion, chopped
- ½ teaspoon chili powder
- 1 small bottle ketchup
- 1 tablespoon sugar

Cover and cook beef, salt and onion slowly, just until meat is no longer pink. Drain well. Add chili powder, ketchup and sugar. Heat thoroughly. Serve on hamburger buns with fries or chips.