

“As much as I wanted him home, being that we just started our married life ... and as much as I needed him ... I knew those people needed him more, and that was a sacrifice I had to make,” Jena says.

Some of the obstacles encountered in North Carolina mirrored the demanding terrain our lineworkers routinely navigate at home, a reminder of the physical demands and expertise required in this line of work. Despite these challenges, the community reached out to our lineworkers in North Carolina. Countless strangers came together, offering their hands, utility vehicles and provisions to our crews.

“I just couldn’t get over the people,” John says. “They were probably the nicest people I ever met. Their kindness was the incentive just to keep going.”

As we commend our heroic lineworkers for their efforts, let’s also recognize and appreciate the dedicated crews and families at home working behind the scenes. These unsung champions played a crucial role in ensuring seamless operations, allowing our cooperative to continue meeting the needs of our members.

Though our lineworkers have returned home, our thoughts continue to be with the Blue Ridge Energy community. 📍

Accelerated Ash Removal Program Results

NICK BERGER, SENIOR DIRECTOR OF ENGINEERING & OPERATIONS

IN 2022, OUTAGES CAUSED BY dead and dying ash trees, impacted by the emerald ash borer, rose significantly. Following the most extensive and costly storm in Claverack Rural Electric Cooperative’s (REC) history, it became evident that decisive actions were necessary to ensure the safety of our employees and members and the reliability of our services.

We deployed our first vegetation audit using drones to identify danger or hazardous trees at one of our sub-stations. The results were staggering: The audit found roughly 2,500 danger trees, each deemed highly likely to result in a power outage. Most of these danger trees were outside our rights of way, with 20 feet on each side of the line. Based on these findings, we estimated 50,000 danger trees in our service territory needed to be removed. This translated to a potential of 50,000 outages in the coming years, which posed a significant threat to our reliability and meant potentially millions of dollars in repair costs.

In August 2022, the cooperative’s board of directors approved a proactive and robust vegetation management plan that shortened our cycle-trimming period from seven to five years. Moreover, additional funding was allocated so we could deploy four specialized ash-tree trimming crews, which were exclusively focused on removing hazard trees across our system. The introduction of the Accelerated Ash Removal Charge Rider (AARC) was initiated to support these efforts.

As the AARC program and monthly member charge are ending in 2024, I am happy to report we have dramatically improved the safety and reliability of our system. This additional investment has allowed us to remove more than 45,000 hazardous trees. Comparing our current reliability statistics to those in 2022, outage instances have decreased by nearly 74%, and outage overtime hours have been reduced by almost 30%.

Our members’ collective efforts and shared responsibility were instrumental in addressing this significant challenge. The modest investments in the program ultimately saved consumer-members millions of dollars in outage time and repair costs.

Claverack REC manages a vast network of more than 2,700 miles of overhead electric distribution line and 60,000 electric poles, with most of our facilities inaccessible by road. Vegetation management is a vital component of our reliability strategy, and there is still work to be done. We remain committed to exploring innovative approaches to enhance our operations. The cooperative values the continued support of our members. 📍

Attention!

Update to
Pay-by-Phone
Number



Effective Nov. 1, our
pay-by-phone number has changed.

The new phone number is
855-940-3871

This change will provide our members with a better experience when securely paying their Claverack or Revolution bill by phone. Easily store payment information, change credit card expiration dates and manage other details at your convenience!



Claverack Rural
Electric Cooperative, Inc.

REVOLUTION