



SHAWN DORFLINGER
MANAGER

Who Owns What?

Understanding electric equipment responsibilities

As July rolls in with extended daylight and rising temperatures, it also brings the increased potential for severe weather. Summer storms can arrive quickly and hit hard, sometimes causing significant damage to essential electric equipment throughout.

Ouachita Electric is prepared to respond swiftly to outages and restore power safely, but it is also important for homeowners to understand which parts of the electric system are their responsibility and which are maintained by the cooperative. Understanding these key differences can help speed up repairs and ensure everyone stays safe.

Your electric cooperative is responsible for maintaining and repairing the equipment and lines that run to your home, including utility poles, distribution power lines, electric meters and padmounted transformers.

Members are responsible for the equipment located between the electric meter and your home or business. Members are also responsible for the weatherhead and service mast located outside the home.

If any equipment that you (the homeowner) are responsible for is damaged, please call a licensed electrician to conduct the repairs. A professional has the experience and know-how to assess and manage these types of repairs.

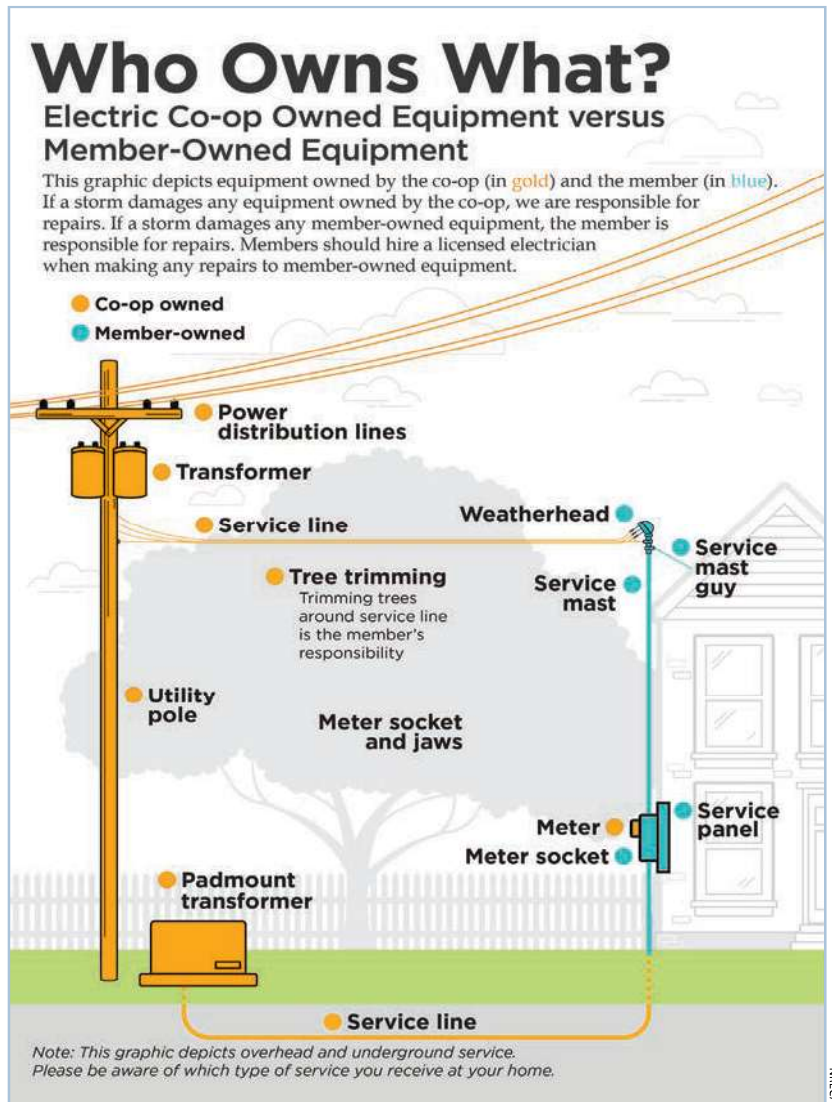
When severe weather damages electrical equipment, it's important to note that any necessary repairs to the homeowner's equipment must be completed before our crews restore power to your home or business. By understanding the equipment you are responsible for, the repair and restoration process will be smoother and faster.

Regular trimming is essential to ensure reliable electric service and minimize

damage from severe weather. We regularly trim trees and vegetation throughout our service territory to improve service reliability. If you spot a tree limb that is obstructing a distribution power line please report it by calling (870) 836-5791.

Any overgrown limbs or vegetation around the service line are the homeowner's responsibility, and in these cases, please call a professional tree trimming service to assist.

By working together to understand the essential equipment that powers daily life, we can all be better prepared to start the repair and restoration process if severe weather impacts our community.





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OUACHITA ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE

**Our offices
will close for
Independence Day
on Friday, July 4.**

Cooling Assistance Available

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) can help households stay safe and cool in the summer by providing help with paying electric bills in summer months to qualifying individuals and families.

Beginning in July, applications are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis, as long as funds are available. Businesses are excluded from receiving the benefit.

LIHEAP is not administered by your local cooperative, but rather through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). It is operated by Community Action Agencies.

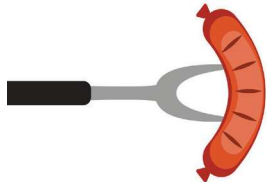
Check eligibility at your local
Community Action Agency
(acaaa.org).



PEAK HEAT DAY TIP

Raise the thermostat
a few degrees to
save energy.





Sizzle Safely

Smart tips for summer grilling

Grilling outdoors is a great way to enjoy warm weather, keep your home cooler and lower energy bills. But with more than half of grill fires occurring during peak summer months, safety should be top of mind.

Each year, grill fires cause thousands of injuries and millions in property damage, according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). Fortunately, most incidents are preventable with proper maintenance and safe practices.

General safety tips:

- Clean your grill regularly to remove grease buildup.
- Set up on a stable surface, away from homes, deck railings and overhanging branches.
- Keep children and pets at least 3 feet away.
- Never leave a lit grill unattended.
- Use grills outdoors only to avoid fire and carbon monoxide risks.

Gas grills

Gas grills pose a higher fire risk due to potential leaks. Check for leaks each season. Mix dish soap and water, apply to the hose and connections and open the valve slightly. Bubbles indicate a leak. If you detect a leak, turn off the gas. If it stops, have the grill serviced. If it continues, call the fire department.

Always open the lid before lighting a gas grill. If the flame goes out, turn off the gas and wait five minutes before relighting.

Charcoal grills

Use only charcoal starter fluid — never gasoline or other flammable liquids. Never add fluid to an already lit fire. Store starter fluid away from heat and children. Let coals cool completely before disposing of them in a metal container.

Electric grills

Use only outdoor-rated electric grills. Avoid using them in wet conditions. Keep cords and connections dry and plug into a GFCI outlet. Inspect cords for damage before use and unplug after grilling.

Cleaning matters

Dirty grills are a leading cause of fires. Let your grill cool before cleaning, and follow the manufacturer's instructions. Clean grates, burners, grease traps and side tables regularly.

By following these tips, you can enjoy a safe, flavorful grilling season with peace of mind. For more information, visit safeelectricity.org.



Grilling is always a crowd-pleaser. Cooking al fresco keeps your home cooler on hot summer days.

