



Claiborne Electric Cooperative

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CLAIBORNE ELECTRIC NEWS

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Manager's Message

This Fall, Refresh Your Cybersecurity Habits

As the leaves begin to change and we settle into the routines of fall, it's a good time to take stock of a few things around the house—preparing for cooler weather, checking our heating systems and getting ready for the months ahead. It's also a good time to refresh our cybersecurity habits.

October is National Cybersecurity Awareness Month, but protecting your personal information is something that deserves attention all year long.

At Claiborne Electric, cybersecurity is a critical part of providing safe, reliable electric service. While much of our focus is on protecting the physical systems that operate the electric grid, we also work to protect the systems and information that help us serve you—including online accounts, payment systems, member portals and outage communications.

Unfortunately, scammers are becoming more sophisticated, too. Artificial intelligence (AI) is making it easier for cyber criminals to create convincing emails, text messages, websites and even voice messages that can look and sound legitimate. The FBI has warned that generative AI can make fraudulent schemes more believable by eliminating many of the errors that once helped us identify a scam. That matters when it comes to utility scams.

A scammer may impersonate Claiborne Electric and claim your account is past due, your service is about to be disconnected, or you need to make an immediate payment. The message might even include our logo, use professional-looking language or direct you to a website that appears legitimate. With AI helping scammers create more convincing communications, simply looking for spelling mistakes or other obvious warning signs may no longer be enough. And these scams are not a small problem.

According to the Federal Trade Commission, consumers reported losing \$3.5 billion to imposter scams in 2025, making these types of scams the most commonly reported type of fraud. Nearly one in three fraud reports involved an imposter scam.

So, what should you do if you receive an unexpected message claiming to be from Claiborne Electric?

If a message creates a sense of urgency or threatens immediate disconnection, take a moment to verify it. Don't click the link or call the phone number provided in the message. Instead, contact Claiborne Electric directly using our trusted methods. You can reach us by phone at (318) 927-3504 or (318) 368-3011; through our website chat at www.our.coop; or by email billing@our.coop.

You can also take steps to protect your online accounts before a scam occurs. Start with your password. Longer is generally better than simply adding more special characters. Choose a long, unique passphrase that is difficult for others to guess, and don't reuse the same password across multiple accounts.

If the accounts you access online offer multifactor authentication (MFA), consider using it. MFA adds an extra layer of protection by requiring an additional way to verify your identity, such as a code sent to your phone or an authentication app. Claiborne's SmartHub app also offers MFA security; to active MFA on your account login into SmartHub then in the left-hand menu select Settings > Security > Two-Factor Authentication.

Most importantly, remember that you don't have to make a payment simply because someone tells you that you do. We want you to have an opportunity to verify any unexpected request.

Claiborne Electric is committed to protecting the systems that help us deliver your electricity and serve our members. You can help by protecting your own account, slowing down when something seems urgent and contacting us directly when you're unsure.

Michael Marcotte, Claiborne Electric General Manager & CEO

For questions about your account or payment options, contact Claiborne Electric at
(318) 927-3504 or
(318) 368-3011 or
email **billing@our.coop**.



NEED TO KNOW

Our offices will be **open**
Veteran's Day, November 11th.

FOR NOVEMBER

Our offices will be **closed**
November 26th & 27th for
the Thanksgiving Holiday.



CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT UPDATE

In 2025 the Cooperative completed an extensive planning process to develop a 5- to 7-year capital improvement initiative focused on upgrading the resilience and reliability of our electrical infrastructure for you, our members. Our 2026 projects have included reconductoring 14.5 miles of primary lines, upgrading 42 breakers, and installing or upgrading six voltage regulators. This year's keystone project was the Farmerville Rural 69 kV transmission extension and substation upgrade. By the end of 2026 the Coop expects to complete almost \$8 million in capital projects throughout its service territory.

NATIONAL CO-OP MONTH

When you hear the word cooperative, what comes to mind? As your local electric co-op, we hope you think of Claiborne Electric. Regardless of the services offered, all cooperatives have one thing in common: they're led by the people they serve--and that simple idea makes a meaningful difference.

Cooperatives come in all shapes and sizes, each created to meet a specific need. Credit unions help members save and borrow money. Producer cooperatives, like Ocean Spray and Land O'Lakes, help farmers bring their products to market. Retail cooperatives, like REI and ACE Hardware, are owned by their shoppers or a membership of store owners, while housing cooperatives give residents a voice in managing their communities. And utility cooperatives like Claiborne Electric provide reliable electricity to the communities they serve.

Unlike many businesses that answer to outside investors or shareholders, cooperatives are built for their members. Their goal isn't simply to earn a profit—it's to provide value, meet unique local needs and strengthen the communities they call home.

Our story began in 1938 when neighbors came together to bring electricity to an area when other utilities wouldn't. While a lot has changed since then, our purpose has remained steady. We're still here to provide power and make decisions with our community's best interests in mind. Being locally owned means we have the flexibility to focus on what matters most to the communities we serve. That's why no two electric cooperatives are exactly alike. Every community has different needs, and every cooperative reflects those priorities.

For some co-ops, that means expanding programs that help members save energy and money. Others may focus on supporting economic development, investing in new technology or creating new opportunities for local students.

You'll also find the co-op difference in the little things. It's the lineworkers restoring power after a storm. The employees answering your questions when you call. The team members volunteering at community events. The board members, your neighbors, who help guide decisions for the future. We're your neighbor and local energy partner, and we're committed to serving this community for generations to come.

This National Co-op Month, we invite you to join us in celebrating the cooperative difference, because this co-op belongs to you. Whether it's Claiborne Electric, your local credit union or ACE Hardware, cooperatives prove that when people work together, everyone benefits. Your membership is what makes our mission possible and it's what keeps us focused on serving the people and communities that matter most.

KINDS OF CO-OPS

Cooperatives come in many forms—from electric utilities and credit unions to farm supply stores and housing co-ops—but all cooperatives are built with a common purpose: to meet the needs of the members they serve.

Co-ops strengthen local communities, keep decisions close to home and invest in long-term success.

October is National Co-op Month.

