



Give Local. Give Powerfully.

Make a Year-End Gift to the NHEC Foundation

As 2025 comes to a close, we invite you to make a meaningful impact right here in New Hampshire. The NHEC Foundation, supported entirely by voluntary donations from Co-op members, has awarded nearly \$6 million to local nonprofits that promote health, education, hunger relief, the arts and community well-being. That's the power of neighbors helping neighbors.

Whether you round up your monthly electric bill or make a one-time tax-deductible gift, your contribution fuels real change across our service territory.

Make your gift before December 31 to maximize your 2025 tax benefits and help us strengthen our communities as we head into 2026.



Your year-end donation helps us:

- Fund scholarships for local students
- Support Project Care, which assists members struggling to pay their electric bills
- Provide grants to nonprofits serving our communities



NEW HAMPSHIRE
Electric Co-op

DECEMBER 2025

DIGGING UP THE PAST

In the 1960s, many electric utilities jumped on board with what they saw as a new system of delivering electrical service more reliably: burying wires directly in a trench several feet underground. Over time, these unprotected wires began to deteriorate, which is why the Co-op is in the midst of a major project to replace and better protect those lines all in an effort to improve reliability for members.

At the time, utilities thought this was a way of reducing the number of broken poles and, theoretically, this would help with reliability and require less maintenance.

Known as "direct buried" service lines, the Granite State has shown us how unforgiving it can be. New Hampshire's mineral-rich soil combined with the annual ground freezing and thawing caused these service lines to degrade over time.

We're not called the Granite State for nothing. New Hampshire's rocky ground makes burying wires quite challenging. But doing it the right way this time is important for ensuring reliability.

Prioritizing projects based on outage events and reliability issues for members, the Co-op began gathering and analyzing data in 2017 and designed long-term plans to learn from this system and remedy the issues. Estimated to take some 15 years to accomplish throughout our districts, the project aims to replace three miles of direct buried lines each year and rebury the new lines in conduits to protect and prolong their service without interruption.

"The (direct buried) wires are unprotected and the neutral wire – typically the copper wire – is exposed to dirt and soil and it deteriorates over time," said Line Design Technician Darrell Dunn who is part of the direct buried underground team. His job is to go out and document the existing conditions of the direct buried lines.

"We see what's existing and what needs to be changed and then we go back to the maps and start designing it based on what we see in the field and what we're trying to accomplish," Darrell said.

It's almost akin to opening up old walls in a house: You're never quite sure what you will find. Sometimes there are trees growing where none had been decades ago; sometimes, tennis courts. Sometimes, a degraded service line, which had not been previously mapped out gets revealed as a nearby dig is happening.



"Projects," said Darrell, "need to remain fluid."

Known as the "Direct Buried Underground Project," the first of the Co-op digs began in early 2019, seeking to replace the old wires by running new wires within a conduit. The conduit runs within an enclosed underground concrete vault, an additional means of protecting the cables. When the trench is filled, concrete slabs cover the vaulted area and on top sits the transformer, which ensures safer usable levels of voltage flowing into members' homes.

"This process eliminates a lot of the decay that has and would have occurred inevitably in the existing wires that were directly buried," Darrell said.

Time, the elements and the site logistics all contribute if there is a loss of power and the circuit breaks, Darrell said. Additionally, the difficulty becomes figuring out where the break or breaks occurred, depending on how many hundreds of feet the wire had been run.

At the end of the day, the mission remains — providing safe and reliable service to members.

"We're doing something for the members that is also for the company and that is going to be useful long-term. The wires will probably be here a lot longer than I will," he laughed.

TO DATE, SINCE THE DIRECT BURIED UNDERGROUND PROJECT BEGAN IN 2019:

- **20.98 miles** or 110,801 feet of underground trench have been dug
- **43.63 miles** or 230,377 feet of underground cable have been run
- **257** concrete vaults have been installed



NEED MORE CONTROL?

NEED MORE CONTROL?

SmartHub Can Help

So many things in life are out of your control. Managing your electric account doesn't have to be one of them. SmartHub puts controlling your Co-op account in the palm of your hand. You can pay your bill, receive text alerts during power outages, track your energy usage and report an outage instantly.

So sign up today and use SmartHub to conveniently control your account. Already signed up? Make sure you're using all of SmartHub's features. Go to nhec.com/smarthub-2/.

579 Tenney Mountain Hwy
Plymouth, NH 03264
www.nhec.com

To report an outage,
please call **855-960-3075**

For member service, please call
800.698.2007 (8-5, M-F) or
email solutions@nhec.com



MAZZEI

Keeps the Co-op's Mission in Focus

As a kid, Josh Mazzei was learning that there were a lot of people who lived in rural New Hampshire without electricity prior to World War II. What astonished a young Josh was that this wasn't ancient history, it was just a few decades earlier. That just didn't seem right to him. Today, as Chief Operating Officer, Josh has seen firsthand what those rural stretches are like and the effort it took to bring electricity to those hard-to-reach places and keep it flowing.

There are members, he said, whose parents or grandparents benefited directly from the formation of the Co-op and having electricity in their homes for the first time.

"They know the difference that the Co-op provided in building out this infrastructure to areas of the state that other large utilities didn't have a financial interest in doing," he said. "Our roots are in providing electricity in places where no one else would serve. Today, it's kind of a hard concept to wrap your head around."

Following four years in the US Navy, Josh entered the industry at 21 as a meter reader for another utility. Walking his routes, his electricity utility education began.

A year later, Josh became a lineworker after having to wait a few rounds for his turn based on seniority.

"To this day," Josh said, "linework is still one of my most favorite jobs. You're building something tangible that serves a purpose and will last."

While he loved linework, a skiing accident sidelined Josh. It gave him the opportunity to learn line design while he recovered. That time also motivated him to further expand his expertise and go to college.

"To this day, Josh said, "linework is still one of my most favorite jobs. You're building something tangible that serves a purpose and will last."

"I got a BA in business and that helped me later in my career. I wouldn't have been considered for a lot of the other jobs if I hadn't done that," he said. "It was a challenge going to school at night, but you never know what life can throw at you, so it's best to be as prepared as possible."

After 10 years on the line, Josh held several roles in electric operations leadership. In 2018, looking for something different as he and his wife raised their young kids, Josh moved to the Co-op from an investor-owned utility as Manager of Operations.

Like many at the Co-op, Josh continued to build his career and was recently promoted to COO, overseeing engineering and operations.

Today, the essential service that replaced kerosene lamps and ice boxes in rural New Hampshire has grown to more than 86,000 homes and businesses in 118 towns. Additionally, the Co-op can count itself among the more than 200 electric co-ops in the competitive and fast-paced broadband business across the country. NH Broadband supports the Co-op's strategic pillar to provide another essential service: reliable and affordable fiber internet to our members.

"Our existence is solely to provide reliable and afford electricity and broadband service to our members in an innovative and cost-effective way," Josh said. "We really hold our decisions to those standards."

BOARD DIRECTOR SPOTLIGHT

NAME: Peter Laufenberg

TITLE: Board Member

HOMETOWN: Thornton, NH

NUMBER OF YEARS ON BOARD: 1 ½



Why did you decide to become more involved with the Co-op and run for a seat on the Board of Directors?

I got involved with the Co-op because the more I learned about how integral NHEC is to our communities the more I wanted to help shape its future. Electricity touches everything we do, and I wanted to better understand the system and contribute however I could.

I was also influenced by several past board members who encouraged me to take a closer look at serving. Talking with them gave me a better sense of the responsibility, the teamwork and the steady approach needed to help guide the Co-op. Those conversations made me feel that my background and temperament would be a good fit.

On other boards I've served on, I've always tried to take a practical, level-headed approach: staying focused on the mission, working well with leadership, and making sure we're following good governance practices. Much of my work has been in regulated environments and that experience has helped me get up to speed on the complexities NHEC navigates every day.

At the end of the day, I stepped forward simply because I care about the Co-op and the people it serves, and I wanted to put my experience to work in a meaningful way.

What would you say are the benefits to being a cooperative versus an investor-owned utility?

One of the biggest advantages of being a cooperative is that our priorities start and end with the people we serve. We don't have shareholders looking for a return, so every decision can be focused on what's best for the membership: keeping rates affordable, maintaining a reliable system, and making smart long-term investments.

Another meaningful difference is how close the Co-op is to the communities it serves. Board members are members themselves. We live here, we pay the same bills and we feel the impact of these decisions just like everyone else. That creates a level of accountability and connection that you don't find in an investor-owned utility.

NHEC's structure is also something unique and something worth cherishing. Being member-owned gives us

members a chance to preserve local control, keep the organization rooted in community values and ensure that the Co-op continues to operate for the benefit of the people who rely on it every day.

What would you like members to know about the current work of the board and the current state of the Co-op?

I'd like members to know that the board is very focused on the practical work that keeps the Co-op strong: maintaining system reliability, managing costs and planning for long-term needs. Much of our work involves steady, behind-the-scenes efforts: expanding our tree-trimming program, continuing capital upgrades across the distribution system and making sure we're prepared for storms and equipment replacement. These steps aren't always visible, but they directly improve the service members receive.

The Co-op is also in a solid financial position, and we continue to have some of the lowest electric rates in the state. That stability comes from careful budgeting, reviewing projects closely and balancing reliability with affordability in every decision the board makes.

Broadband remains an important but evolving area and we are actively evaluating how to support expansion in ways that benefit members and strengthen the communities we serve.

And I think it's important to add this: none of this happens without the employees of NHEC. They are the backbone of the organization. Their expertise, preparation and commitment to serving members, often in tough weather and challenging conditions, make everything possible. The board's work sets direction, but it's the employees who carry out that mission every day.

Overall, the board takes its responsibilities seriously. We review the data, ask hard questions and think through the long-term implications of every decision. As members ourselves, we feel those decisions too and that perspective keeps us grounded and focused on what truly matters.



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Make the season brighter, and more connected, **with NH Broadband!**

