



**Rappahannock  
Electric Cooperative**  
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

# REC NEWS

**May 2019**

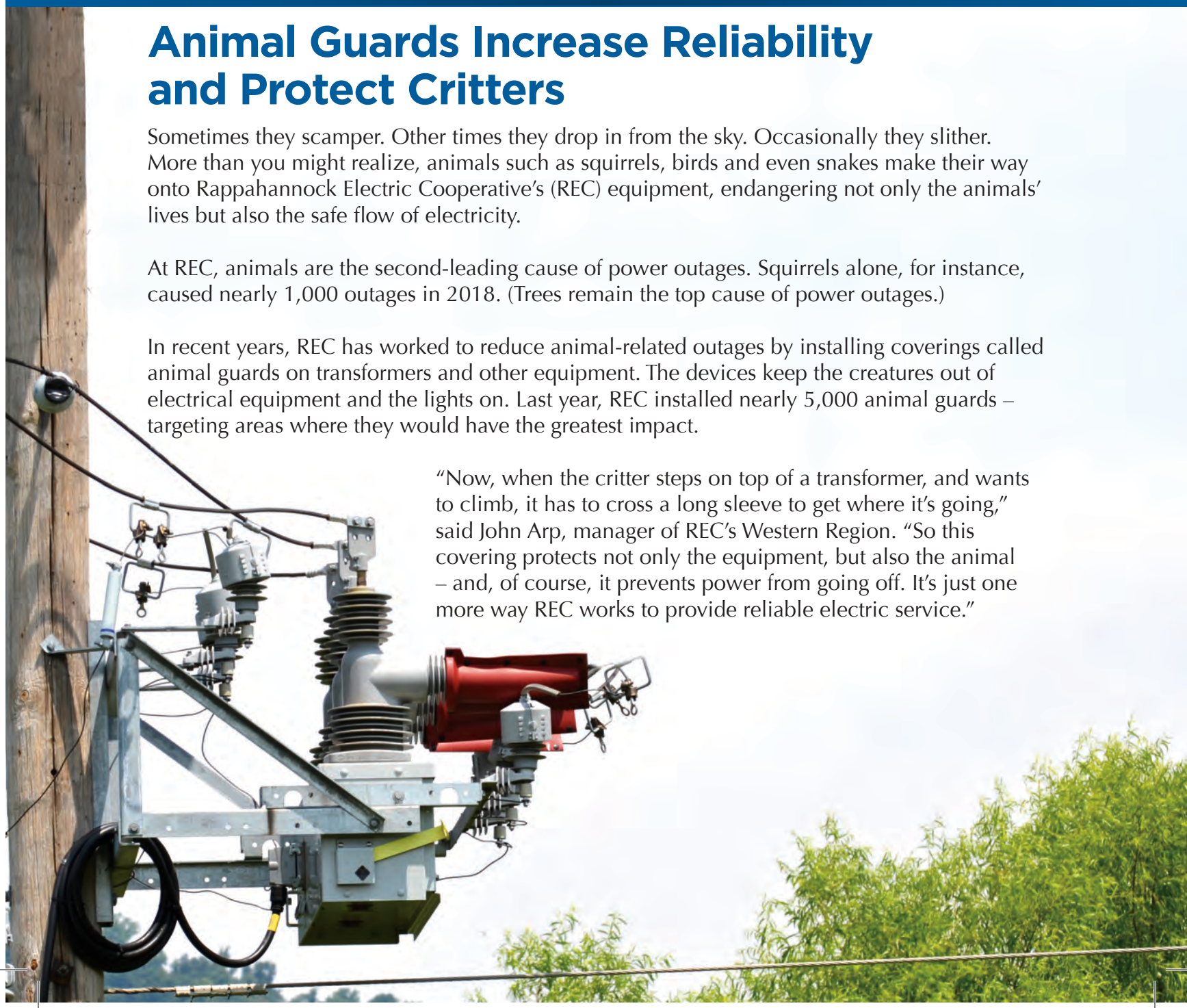
## Animal Guards Increase Reliability and Protect Critters

Sometimes they scamper. Other times they drop in from the sky. Occasionally they slither. More than you might realize, animals such as squirrels, birds and even snakes make their way onto Rappahannock Electric Cooperative's (REC) equipment, endangering not only the animals' lives but also the safe flow of electricity.

At REC, animals are the second-leading cause of power outages. Squirrels alone, for instance, caused nearly 1,000 outages in 2018. (Trees remain the top cause of power outages.)

In recent years, REC has worked to reduce animal-related outages by installing coverings called animal guards on transformers and other equipment. The devices keep the creatures out of electrical equipment and the lights on. Last year, REC installed nearly 5,000 animal guards – targeting areas where they would have the greatest impact.

“Now, when the critter steps on top of a transformer, and wants to climb, it has to cross a long sleeve to get where it's going,” said John Arp, manager of REC's Western Region. “So this covering protects not only the equipment, but also the animal – and, of course, it prevents power from going off. It's just one more way REC works to provide reliable electric service.”





## Solar Made Easy! We're helping Virginia Go Green!

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### SUMMER ENERGY TIPS

- Avoid appliances that create heat - such as clothes dryers and stoves - during the warmest part of the day.
- Set your thermostat to 78 degrees or higher to save energy when the weather is warm.
- Portable dehumidifiers can use a lot of energy. If you must run one, set it to 50-60% and not on continuous run.

### Safety Tip

**Avoid Cheap Chargers:** If you lose or damage your original phone charger, you might be tempted to purchase a less-expensive replacement.

- Stick with the original charger intended for your brand of phone. Cheaper chargers are often made from lower-quality components that might cause electric shock or a fire.
- When not using your charger, be sure to unplug – the device is still drawing electricity, which could cause a fire if the wire short-circuits or comes into contact with water.

