



Keeping Current

The Powerful Choice



Before Building a Deck or Addition This Summer – Read This!

By Sarah Smarrelli

If you're making plans to build a deck or home addition, you likely will need to know the requirements concerning your NOVEC electric meter.

Since the electric meter frequently is located on the back of the house and this is typically the location of decks and additions, special care must be taken to prevent blocking access to the meter.

NOVEC personnel must have access to your electric meter at all times in order to perform periodic inspections, as well as routine maintenance and testing to ensure accurate meter readings.

To avoid any problems, please follow these guidelines when planning your deck or addition:

1. Do a preliminary staking of your addition or deck. Keep in mind the depth and location of your footers and any slope changes you may be considering.
2. Call Miss Utility at 1-800-552-7001 to have all underground utilities located and marked. Each type of utility (electric, water, phone, gas) is assigned a color that helps you determine which utilities may be in conflict with your proposed work. Miss Utility does not locate private services or facilities.
3. Make sure your addition is in compliance with NOVEC's electric meter spacing requirements (see guidelines following).
4. If the proposed addition conflicts with NOVEC underground or overhead facilities, schedule an appointment with a NOVEC Distribution Designer by calling (703) 754-6750 or (888) 335-0500, extension 6750. The designer will determine if relocation of existing NOVEC facilities is required and explain the scope of work involved. Within 10 working days after this appointment, you will receive the proposed cost associated with the scope of work and the anticipated construction scheduling for your service relocation.
5. If meter relocation is required, NOVEC will supply the meter base. However, the homeowner is responsible for hiring an electrician to install the meter base along with

the entrance cable and panel box. This work must also be inspected by the local jurisdiction.

6. If your building plans conflict with other facilities, contact the utility company to determine the most cost-efficient resolution for you. Each utility has different requirements and policies for relocations.
7. Determine the electrical load requirements of the addition(s) you will be making. Contact your electrician to determine whether the existing facilities in your panel box will meet your needs.
8. All additions/decks require permitting and inspections as required by your local jurisdiction. Contact the appropriate local city/county office to obtain these.

Building Guidelines: Electric Meter Clearance Requirements

- If your electric meter will be under it, the bottom of the deck must be at least seven feet high.
- There must be 36 inches of space in front of the meter.
- There must be a 36-inch-wide unobstructed travel path in front of the meter.
- There must be at least eight inches of space on both sides of the meter.
- No structure may be built around the meter, except for approved meter rooms.
- Doors or windows cannot be within one foot of the meter.
- Meters located inside fenced areas must have gate access.

NOTE: Although no fines are imposed by NOVEC if you do not follow these specifications, homeowners do have to pay the entire cost of meter relocation, which can run from \$1,000 to \$2,000.

**For a copy of NOVEC's brochure
"Building Decks & Additions – A Guide for Homeowners"**

call (703) 754-6750 or (888) 335-0500, ext. 6750,
send e-mail to disteng@novec.com,
or download it at
www.novec.com/docs/DeckBrochureMay04.pdf

Miss Utility C.A.R.E.s — Call Before Digging!

By Sarah Smarrelli

If you're making plans to dig in your yard for a new deck or landscaping, be sure to call Miss Utility at least 72 hours before beginning excavation. Miss Utility's free service notifies participating utilities of your request so they can send a locator to mark the location of underground utilities in your work area. This service ensures that you don't cut through any cables or pipes and possibly injure yourself, damage your home, or cause a service interruption.

Whether your project is big or small, always dig with **C.A.R.E.** It's the only way to avoid costly mistakes, fines and even personal injury. Besides, it's the law!

Call Miss Utility at 1-800-552-7001 from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays before you dig. After you call, Miss Utility will inform all participating utilities that may have facilities in your proposed area of excavation. Each individual utility company will do the actual marking.

Allow required time for marking.

After you contact Miss Utility, wait 48 hours, beginning 7 a.m. the next working day following notice, to allow the utilities to mark their facilities. You may begin excavation earlier if Miss Utility informs you that no utility operators will be notified. Working days exclude Saturdays, Sundays, and legal state and national holidays.

Before digging, you must confirm that all applicable utilities have either marked their lines, or indicated that the area is clear of their utility or not in conflict with your work. You can either call the Virginia positive-response system at 1-800-552-3120 to confirm or receive the response by providing an e-mail address or fax number.

Respect the marks.

Protect and preserve the line-location markings from the time the excavation or demolition begins until they are no

longer required for the proper and safe excavation near the utility lines. Request remarking at any time the markings become illegible for any reason.

Excavate carefully.

Conduct a site inspection before beginning your project. Look for clear evidence of unmarked utilities, which includes but is not limited to, visual evidence of an unmarked utility line, knowledge of the presence of a utility line, or faded marks from previous markings. If clear evidence of an unmarked utility line is identified, notify Miss Utility.

If you fail to call Miss Utility and damage a utility line, the Virginia State Corporation Commission can issue fines under the Virginia Utility Damage Prevention Act. For more detailed Miss Utility information, visit www.missutilityofvirginia.com, where you can download a CARE brochure.

In case of utility line damage:

If damage creates an emergency, take immediate steps to safeguard life, health and property, calling 911 if necessary. Immediately notify the utility operator if damage, dislocation or disturbance of an underground utility line occurs.

1-800-552-7001



Call before you dig.

Allow required time for marking.

Respect the marks.

Excavate carefully.

Please do your part to help protect Virginia's vital underground utility lines from damage. Remember, these lines provide you and your community with essential services such as gas, electricity, telephone, water and sewer.

An advertisement for NOVEC. On the left, three people are shown: a man in a white hard hat with 'NOVEC' on it, a woman, and a man wearing a headset. To the right, the text reads 'Reduce Your Commute Electrify Your Career' in large white letters on a blue background. Below that, it says 'Visit Jobs at www.novec.com' and features the NOVEC logo, which includes a stylized lightning bolt and a smiley face.

Substation Upgrades Accomplished to Help Meet Customer Electricity Needs



SARAH SMARRELLI PHOTO



JOHN ROY PHOTO

As part of NOVEC's Short Range Work Plan, Cub Run substation is being upgraded with larger transformers (above left) and a new design to help meet increasing customer electricity usage in Western Fairfax County. As part of that effort, Mark DeChristopher, NOVEC substation electrician 1st class, begins the arduous task of dismantling the old circuit bus. A crane was brought in to install a larger transformer (right) at the Evergreen substation.

By John Roy

During the upgrades at Cub Run substation, a cutting-edge communications protocol – distributed network protocol (DNP3) – was installed. Using NOVEC's fiber-optic network, DNP3 allows staff to monitor substation equipment and download metering, diagnostic, load and other information directly to their PC. The technology also sends fault data to our operations center, which helps pinpoint where a fault has occurred on the power lines, allowing staff to quickly diagnose the problem, dispatch a repair crew and reduce any potential

outage time for customers. It has the potential to save the Co-op \$30,000 per substation and reduces a job that used to take three days to complete down to 30 seconds.

A number of other NOVEC substations also have been upgraded this spring in order to help meet the increasing customer needs. They include the Bloomfield, Bowman, Broad Run, Bull Run, Cardinal, Clark's Gap, Evergreen, Independent Hill, Lindendale, Mill Run, Popeshead, Smoketown and Sycolin substations. Two dozen additional substations are scheduled to be upgraded later in 2006.

NOVEC High Schoolers Attend Cooperative Leadership Conference



Photo Courtesy Rappahannock E.C.

Crystal Heglar of Aldie, center, and Brittany Kestmer of Crimora participate in the store simulation session, in a team led by Brian Wolfe, left, of Rappahannock Electric Cooperative.

By Jeb Hockman

Two students from Loudoun County High School were among the 43 students from throughout Virginia who attended the 2006 Virginia Cooperative Leadership Conference held April 7-9 at Graves' Mountain Lodge in Madison County.

Sponsored by NOVEC, Crystal Heglar from Aldie and Jessica Meadows from Leesburg participated in this intensive three-day educational experience on how member-owned cooperatives conduct business and why co-ops are an important segment of Virginia's overall economy.

The theme of the conference was "Cooperatives: Road to the Future."

Delegate Robert D. Orrock, Sr., who represents District 54 in the Virginia House of Delegates and who attended the conference while he was a student; Dr. Dixie Watts Reaves, professor of agricultural economics at Virginia Tech; and representatives of purchasing, marketing, electric and financial co-ops were among those introducing the young men and women to team building, sound business practices and finance, and conducting hands-on simulations of how a cooperative business works.

The Virginia Cooperative Leadership Conference is conducted each year by the Virginia Council of Farmer Cooperatives. The mission of the non-profit Council, which was founded in 1962, is to promote the understanding of farmer- and consumer-owned cooperatives in the Commonwealth and their contributions to the state economy. For more information, visit www.vcfc.net.

Are You Ready for the Summer Storm Season?

By Sarah Smarrelli

Thunderstorms and other acts of nature can wreak havoc on any electric distribution system, resulting in power outages. Storms can be unpredictable and cause major damage, as we've learned from our recent run of hurricanes in this area and elsewhere with Hurricane Isabel in 2003, Ivan in 2004 and of course, Katrina, Rita and Wilma last year.

Since summer is the prime season for thunderstorms and hurricanes, it's wise to prepare in advance for power outages. If your power does go out, knowing what to do will expedite getting your electricity back on quickly.

If Your Power Goes Out

- First, check your home's fuses or circuit breaker panel to determine if the problem is located inside or outside the house.
- If the problem is outside your house, call NOVEC 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, at (703) 335-0500 or (888) 335-0500 to report the power outage.
- Use our automated Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system to report the outage. Using the IVR speeds up outage reporting and also provides you with outage-update messages.
- During a widespread outage, phone lines may sometimes be overloaded and you could get a busy signal. Please try again and remember your neighbors will also be calling.

During a Power Outage

- Listen to the radio for weather reports and updated information about power-restoration efforts. During major outages NOVEC supplies restoration information to both local and metro radio stations.
- If you have a battery-powered or wireless computer or a source of back-up generation you can log on to www.novec.com and take advantage of our online outage map. This map provides customers and the media with real-time data from our outage-management system showing outage locations and how many customers are affected.
- The refrigerator will keep food cold for about six hours. A full freezer will stay cold for approximately 48 hours (24 hours if

it's half full). The Centers for Disease Control recommends throwing away perishable foods (meat, poultry, fish, eggs and leftovers) that have been above 40°F for two hours or more.

- If it looks like the power will be off for more than six hours, pack milk, dairy products, meats, poultry, eggs, etc., in a cooler with ice. And, if power is expected to be off more than eight hours, prepare a cooler with ice for your freezer items.
- Turn the air conditioner or heat pump thermostat to "OFF" This will help prevent excessive power demands when electricity is restored that could damage NOVEC's electric-distribution system and lengthen the outage. Five to 10 minutes after power is restored, turn the unit back on.

Restoration Process

- NOVEC's goal is to restore power safely and quickly to everyone in the most efficient manner possible.
- The process of power restoration is often complicated, especially during severe weather. Damage may occur at numerous points along the distribution system rather than at one isolated spot.
- Repair work begins with major NOVEC facilities, such as substations and main circuits that supply power to thousands of customers. Power is then restored to the main distribution lines serving the largest number of customers and to public safety and other essential-service customers. We then move on to restoring power to schools, shelters, public water and sewer systems, traffic signals, and finally individual power lines serving a single home.

Critical Care/Special Conditions Customers

NOVEC maintains critical care notifications from customers who shared with NOVEC that they have conditions that may place them at an elevated risk during an extended power outage. However, it is important for critical care customers to have a plan to provide for their needs in case of an extended outage. Depending on the cause of the outage, there is no guarantee that NOVEC can restore power to them any faster than our other customers.

Preparing for Power Outages

We encourage customers to collect some helpful supplies for use during power outages. Use this checklist to be sure you have the following items on hand and ready to use:

- θ Alternate source of light: flashlights with new batteries, candles, oil lamp and fuel.
- θ A telephone that doesn't depend on electricity to operate.
- θ Water for drinking and cooking. If you have a well with an electric-powered pump, fill your bathtub with water before the storm for flushing toilets.
- θ Non-perishable food items that require little or no cooking, such as peanut butter, powdered milk, cereal, canned meat and soup.
- θ Manually operated can opener.
- θ Battery-powered radio with extra batteries to bring you power-restoration reports and weather updates.
- θ Special items for infants, elderly and family members with disabilities.

Do We Have Your Phone Number?

NOVEC's Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system works quickly and efficiently when customers call to report an outage – if their information is accurate. A lingering problem is incorrect customer phone numbers. The phone number listed with your account is the only number recognized by the IVR. If you call to report an outage and the IVR cannot match the phone number you call from to an account on the system, you will be given one of three options: enter the phone number for the location without power; enter your account number; or leave a voice message. All of these options add precious time to the process of reporting your outage.

If you are more likely to use your cell phone to report an outage, you should list that number on your NOVEC account. To update your account with the accurate phone number, call (703) 335-0500 or (888) 335-0500, select option "2" and follow the prompts. Taking a few minutes to do this could save precious time when reporting a power outage.

2006 Annual Meeting to Be at a New Location

By Inia Burginger

If you're one of the hundreds of customers who attends the NOVEC Annual Meeting at Stonewall Jackson High School in Manassas, don't go there this year.

You'll be the only person there.

Because Stonewall Jackson's auditorium is undergoing renovations, the 2006 NOVEC Annual Meeting will be held at a different location that was still being finalized at press time.

Please watch the upcoming *What's Current* bill inserts and future editions of this magazine for the exact date and location. We anticipate the meeting will be held late in September, but will announce the date and location once they are confirmed.

Board Elections to Be Held; Nominations Now Being Accepted

One of the guiding principles of cooperatives is governance by member-owners. Because you receive your electricity from NOVEC, you are a member-owner (customer) of the Cooperative.

At the 2006 Annual Meeting, all customers will have the opportunity to exercise their right to elect two people to four-year terms on the Board of Directors. Customers unable to attend the meeting may still participate by designating another person as their proxy to vote on their behalf. You can expect a packet of information about annual meeting, including a proxy form, to arrive in your mailbox in late August.

The NOVEC Board of Directors Evaluation Committee will present a report at the annual meeting about the overall performance of the Board in handling the business affairs of the Cooperative. In addition, the committee will evaluate the qualifications of incumbent directors who have been nominated for re-election.

Making a Nomination

According to the Bylaws of the Cooperative, Article IV – Directors, Section 7 – Nominations:

“Nominations for directors shall be made by any 15 or more members in writing over their signatures, said written nomination petitions to be delivered to the office of the president/CEO not less than 70 days prior to the next annual meeting. The secretary shall post the said nomination petitions at the principal office of the Cooperative and shall mail with the notice of the meeting a statement of the number of directors to be elected and all the nominations made for said directorships. No additional nominations shall be made from the floor at the meeting of members.”

Under the terms of Article IV – Directors, Section 5 – Qualification for Directors:

“... all nominees shall be bona fide residents of the particular districts from which they are nominated. Further, no member shall be eligible to become or remain a director or to hold any position of trust in the Cooperative who is in any way employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise or a business selling electric energy to the Cooperative. When a membership is held jointly by two persons, either one, but not both, may be elected a director.”

Nomination Deadline

To obtain a nomination petition for the NOVEC Board of Directors, call (703) 335-0500 or (888) 335-0500. Mail petitions to: Stan Feuerberg, President/CEO, NOVEC Corporate Office, P.O. Box 2710, Manassas, VA 20108. The deadline for submission of petitions will be announced, along with the confirmed meeting date and location, in the next issue of this magazine and in the June *What's Current* bill insert.

Two Incumbents Seek Re-election to NOVEC Board



J. Manley Garber is seeking to continue representing customers in District 7, the Woodbridge / Dale City / Montclair area.



Cynthia F. Gilbride currently represents District 9, the area of Fairfax County west of Rte. 66, Loudoun County, and South Riding. She is seeking a third term on the Board.

NOVEC Honored by Prince William Education Foundation

The Prince William County Education Foundation proudly presented their “Mardi Gras” event on Friday, April 21, celebrating their achievement and recognizing and acknowledging the many businesses who invested so much during the 2005-'06 school year. The gala is one of the big fundraising events of the year for supporting the upcoming year 2006-'07.

NOVEC was among the 13 businesses recognized for generously contributing to the Foundation’s “Read to Achieve with KidBiz” capital project during the 2005/06 school year.

Donna Snellings, NOVEC public relations liaison and past president of the Prince William County Education Foundation, received the Star Contributor Award on the Cooperative’s behalf.

“By supporting the Foundation we are providing an opportunity for our students to excel and reach for the stars. There is no better foundation upon which to build our community’s future,” said Snellings. Members of the Public Relations department were also present at the event to support the Foundation.

NOVEC Wheels Into School Career Day



JOHN ROY PHOTOS



By Inia Burginger

Students at Glenkirk Elementary School in Gainesville learned recently that jobs on wheels can be fast and flashy or steady and safety-minded.

NOVEC’s tall bucket truck stole the show at the Careers on Wheels Day, with many students taking rides in the bucket and asking questions of Roy Robinson and Robert Jackson of NOVEC’s Construction department.

Other students were wowed by the flash of the race car driven by James Penny and co-sponsored by NOVEC. You can see the car in action throughout the race season at Old Dominion Speedway in Manassas.

NOVEC Teams Raise \$16,400 for WalkAmerica

By Donna Snellings

On an overcast, yet otherwise perfect Sunday morning, approximately 500 walkers attended the WalkAmerica in Prince William County on April 23. The 10 walkers registered for NOVEC’s Prince William County team raised approximately \$8,800 by walk day.

Manley Garber, chairman of the board of directors for NOVEC and this year’s honorary chair for WalkAmerica, is one of the top fundraisers for WalkAmerica, raising more than \$6,700 this year. “This is my main charity event. I feel supporting WalkAmerica is a win-win for the community,” said Garber, who has been participating in WalkAmerica with NOVEC for about 16 years.

On April 30, the Fauquier County WalkAmerica took place at Airlie Conference Center and the weather was beautiful. The 18 registered walkers for the NOVEC team raised a record \$7,000.

The Loudoun County WalkAmerica took place at Ida Lee Park and also enjoyed the beautiful weather on April 30. The NOVEC team raised over \$600.

WalkAmerica is the March of Dimes’ major fund-raiser, producing 50 percent of the chapter’s operating budget in one day. NOVEC employees, friends and family members are proud to be a part of this event in Prince William, Loudoun and Fauquier counties.

By participating in this charitable event, NOVEC is not only helping to save babies from birth defects, low birth weight and infant mortality, but also is helping to reduce the ever-increasing cost of healthcare in America. In dollars and cents, it comes down to the simple fact that healthy babies cost less than babies needing extensive medical care. Normal delivery costs about \$7,000 while average hospital costs for a low-birth-weight baby can range from \$15,000 to upwards of \$100,000. With WalkAmerica, everyone is a winner.



Chuck Duvall and Susan Rubin confer about the legislative issues, prior to giving their public remarks.

BILL SHERROD PHOTOS



ACRE members and their guests await their turn to be called for the delicious meal. They are (from left) Skip Hollcroft, Ray Trenum, Shantina James, Christine Kelly, Eric Stewart, Tina Stewart, Leslie Perry and Libby Gooden.

ACRE Members Involved in Legislative Process

By Donna Snellings

The weather and setting were beautiful at the historic Inn at Vint Hill for the annual ACRE dinner held on April 26. Chuck Duvall, of Lindl Corp., and Susan Rubin, assistant vice president of government affairs for the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives (VMDAEC), spoke to about 80 ACRE members in attendance.

Through ACRE, the Action Committee for Rural Electrification, employees of electric cooperatives from around the country get involved in the state and national legislative process by supporting the people who urge legislative action on myriad issues that impact cooperatives and their employees.

“We have 157 ACRE members this year; thinking of their jobs, company and the political process they felt compelled to join ACRE. We thank the employees, family members and retirees for their membership in ACRE,” said Mike Curtis, NOVEC vice president of public relations.

Curtis introduced special guests Richard Johnstone, executive vice president, and Bill Sherrod, managing editor of *Cooperative Living* magazine, both from VMDAEC.

NOVEC’s President/CEO Stan Feuerberg continued with opening remarks mentioning that ACRE membership is the best all-around value for the \$25 membership. “We do appreciate those who understand how important ACRE membership is to the Co-op,” said Feuerberg.

Susan Rubin addressed the group about the legislative issues currently facing cooperatives. “These are challenging times for any industry in the energy business. Every week you hear or read a story concerning shortages on fuel supplies and energy costs,” Rubin said. “In January and February the media was constantly covering stories about the rise in the electric bills in Delaware and Maryland. It was reported that energy costs were going to increase by 59 percent in Delaware.”

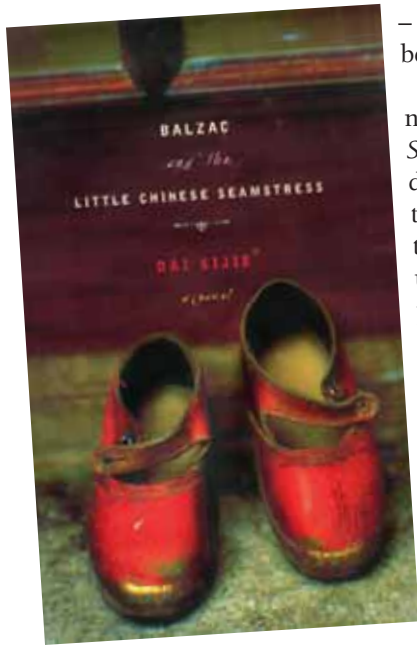
According to Rubin, the Virginia legislature had two main issues of concern for co-ops this session. One was a bill introduced by Senator Whipple, of the 31st District, Arlington, related to Virginia’s renewable-fuel portfolio. Originally co-ops and municipalities were exempt from the mandates of the bill, but were added back in in the last three weeks as a result of amendments. “With our relationship with Senator Whipple that has been developed through our ACRE membership, we were able to have the bill ‘pulled.’ A study group has now been established and co-ops are part of that study group,” Rubin said.

The second bill was sponsored by Senator Wagner of the 7th District, Tidewater. “This concerned off-shore drilling, compounded with alternative fuel sources, methanol, coal, nuclear power and renewables. This bill passed and went to the governor for signature. The governor’s office amended the bill relating to the distance off the Virginia shoreline for the drilling. This bill was important to consumers in part because it includes gradual fuel-cost increases annually,” Rubin explained.

Rubin and Duvall also reflected on the recent death of Delegate Harry Parrish who was a friend to the co-op, an “institution,” according to Duvall, and “steady all the way to the end.” Duvall commented on the Speaker of the House’s call for the special election to fill Delegate Parrish’s office, which is expected to be a big political decision for NOVEC. “The good side is we will have the opportunity to begin and develop a relationship and get involved with the new delegate from the grassroots. The bad side is we won’t have that continuity and seniority,” Duvall explained. “Co-ops need to get ahead of the curve, and with your ACRE memberships we have the opportunity to develop and build relationships and open doors.”

Be Part of "All Fairfax Reads" This Summer

Looking for summer reading that will delight you? Then participate in "All Fairfax Reads," the one-book, one-community project that encourages residents – even if they don't live in Fairfax – to read and discuss the same book between now and September.



This year's selection is the bestselling novel *Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress* by Dai Sijie. Set in 1970s China during Mao's Cultural Revolution, this is the story of two young intellectuals sent to the remote countryside to carry fertilizer up and down mountain trails. Their only pleasures derive from an illicit stash of Western books and their efforts to awaken an illiterate Chinese seamstress to similar joys. *The Washington Post* called the book "a funny, touching, sly and altogether delightful novel ... about the power of art to enlarge our imaginations."

Watch your local newspapers for information on several community events about the novel that will happen this fall.

"All Fairfax Reads" is co-sponsored by NOVEC, the Fairfax County Public Library Foundation, the Friends of the Fairfax City Library, George Mason University's "Fall for the Book" program and others.

**Two Thin Dimes Dry
One Full Load of Laundry**

The Value of Electricity. The best value in energy today is at your fingertips. NOVEC, your customer-owned electric cooperative, delivers power when and where you need it and at delivery rates that haven't changed in 14 years. So, while we encourage you to conserve, we invite you to enjoy. That's the value of power from the region's most reliable electric utility.

NOVEC
The Powerful Choice
www.novec.com

Based on a 40 minutes of drying time.



NORTHERN VIRGINIA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE



Chairman:
J. Manley Garber
District 7

Woodbridge/Dale City/Montclair



Vice-Chairman:
Wade C. House
District 5

Nokesville/Haymarket/Bull Run



Secretary:
Michael Ragan
District 6

Lake Jackson/Buckhall/
Manassas Park/Bristow



Treasurer:
Walter Grove
District 8

Fauquier/Stafford



Malcolm Ames
At Large



James Chesley
District 3

Fairfax County, East of Rt. 66



Cynthia Gilbride
District 9

Fairfax County, West of Rt. 66
Loudoun County, South Riding



Don M. Middleton
District 2

Loudoun County, South of Rt. 7



Ann Wheeler
District 4

Manassas/Gainesville



Stan C. Feuerberg
President and CEO

Corporate Office

10323 Lomond Drive
Mailing Address • P.O. Box 2710
Manassas, Virginia 20108-0875
(703) 335-0500 or (888) 335-0500

www.novec.com