

Transmission line serendipity

Of concern to some, including the Northern Neck Electric Cooperative (NNEC), is the increased costs of going underground with Dominion's proposed replacement of transmission lines across the Rappahannock River.

The underground costs, according to the project engineer at Dominion's Middlesex open house, would be "less than 5 cents per month." But what if every one of the 2.1 million Dominion rate payers got a substantial, monthly refund? They will—I'll show you the math.

The cost of transmission projects is distributed statewide, per the SCC. The SCC determines rates common to all served by Dominion. We pay, for example, for the underground costs at the York River, and between Alexandria and Arlington counties.

According to the May 4 front page article in the Richmond Times Dispatch, the average 2.1 million Dominion customer (1,000 KW per month), will have a \$4.35 monthly decrease due to lower fuel prices. In addition, there will be a \$1.25 monthly increase in costs for transmission expenditures. Thus the net cost to rate payers is a \$3.10 monthly decrease. Dominion is switching from coal to natural gas, and natural gas is abundant with fracking, so the savings should continue for some time. Savings also pass to wholesale customers like the NNEC, who should pass these savings to their cooperative customers.

This couldn't come at a more opportune time. Going under the Rappahannock is the right choice to preserve a natural asset for all Virginians, even all Americans, and costs less than 5 cents per month. Subtract, and the net refund to all 2.1 million customers will be \$3.05 per month.

There is an old saying that says, good things come to those who wait.

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