

Piedmont Electric CONNECTION

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Hillsborough, N.C.

www.pemc.coop

February 2012



Beat the Peak!

Program Offers Members a Chance to Help

We need your help in controlling wholesale power costs. Wholesale power is Piedmont Electric's biggest expense. A large portion of that cost is determined on peak days, usually hot summer afternoons.

With your help, we will be able to reduce the summer peak load which will benefit the Cooperative with lower wholesale power costs.

The "Beat the Peak" program is designed to help you know when

power costs are going to be high so you can take action.

As part of the "Beat the Peak" program, we will be asking you to adjust your thermostat, turn off lights and delay the use of major appliances on hot summer weekdays between 1 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Why participate? Piedmont Electric pays its wholesale power supplier significantly higher prices for power used during peak use times—and these costs have to be passed on to the Cooperative's members.

How does "Beat the Peak" program work? When Piedmont Electric thinks a peak situation is eminent, the Cooperative will send a text message or email to members who volunteer to participate. This information will also be posted on the website at www.pemc.coop.

Members will be asked to adjust their cooling system thermostats by at least three degrees and to limit their electricity use.

To volunteer to receive these alerts, text **BTPEAK** to **85700** to enroll for text alerts, or send an email to BeatThePeak@pemc.coop, or call the Cooperative at 800.222.3107.

Stay on Top of Unsafe Products

Annually thousands of product recalls—many of them electrical devices—occur. Given that some recalls involve items that have already done great harm, it's important to stay on top of developments.

Recalls begin in two ways: A federal regulatory agency issues a mandatory recall, or the manufacturer voluntarily recalls the product after receiving information that it could be unsafe.

Stay on top of the dozens of recalls that are issued every

week with these key sources:

Several government agencies joined forces to create www.recalls.gov. In addition to having the latest information, www.recalls.gov allows users to keyword search through its archives.

The website also boasts a mobile phone application, which enables consumers to have information when and where they need it. Some of the agencies provide users with new information automatically every day. Some also use Facebook, Twitter and other applications to share information easily.

Sources: Recalls.gov; Consumer Reports

Bright Ideas Grant Winners...

19 area educators have received Bright Idea grants from Piedmont EMC. Shown are the educators who received their awards at the Bright Ideas Award luncheon in Raleigh in November 2011.





From Your President...

What's Ahead in Power Costs?

R. G. Brecheisen

President & Chief Executive Officer

There's never a good time to talk about the cost of anything increasing, and with our dependency on electricity, it's even harder news to bear.

Electricity prices are forecast to increase in the future. Numerous reasons factor into this prediction, including the fact the cost of coal, which fuels over half of our supplied electricity, has doubled in recent years.

Natural gas, a reasonable alternative to coal, is expensive and volatile in cost. Further, the cost of new power generation is rising and our wholesale suppliers are seriously contemplating building new power plants to meet the demand.

Another factor is increased energy regulation on the federal level, which will have cost implications as older coal plants are being replaced.

The Wholesale Power Cost Adjustment (WPCA) Rider has been used to adjust for the monthly variations of actual cost of power compared to the power cost recovered in the rates.

If the actual cost of wholesale

power is different from the cost of power in the rate design, a credit or charge is assessed to compensate for that difference.

The wholesale power cost is evaluated and applied monthly to the member's bills. The actual monthly cost of wholesale power changes each month because of load factor variations and changes to our power supplier's bills.

In November 2011, Piedmont Electric had to increase the WPCA to members because the forecasted costs versus actual costs of our power supplier, Duke Energy, increased. The increase is not directly tied to the publicized Duke Energy request for a retail rate increase.

For the first seven months of 2011, Piedmont Electric actually had a negative WPCA, and between August and October the WPCA was nominal.

We cannot stop the cost of electricity from rising; however the Cooperative is looking out for the best interest of the members by helping them in finding ways to lower their electricity bills and keep their electricity affordable.

To this end, Piedmont Electric offers a variety of services and programs, including free home energy analyses, low interest Energy Efficiency and Renewable Loans to qualified members and rebates on heating and cooling systems, CFLs and solar water heaters.

As noted in the cover wrap of this magazine, as well as on the previous page, Piedmont Electric is starting a new program called "Beat the Peak."

By voluntarily reducing electricity use during peak hours members can help reduce the demand on the system—and help save on both the Cooperative's and their own power bills.

By working together, we can reduce the cost of power supply.

R. G. Brecheisen

By the Numbers...

- 1,874 members have signed up for the use monitoring portion of www.MyUsage.com
- 692 members are participating in the FlexPay Program
- 447 members have turned in receipts for 4,412 CFLs, representing a total of 1,513,316 kWhs saved toward our Senate Bill 3 Mandate
- 33 solar water heater rebates given to members
- 865 electric water heater wraps sold
- 548 residential members on Time-of-Day Rates
- 718 visits to TogetherWeSave.com for a total calculated savings with the home savings calculator tool of \$263,008.51

If Your Power Goes Out, Call Us...

If your power goes out, call Piedmont Electric's outage reporting number—800.449.2667—to report the outage.

The Cooperative uses your phone number to determine your service location when you use the automated outage reporting system to report a service outage.

If, like some folks—you no longer have a land line and use a cellular phone, please make sure to let the Cooperative know.

Unless we have your correct phone number(s), we may not be able to pinpoint your outage location as quickly.

Please complete and return the form on your monthly billing statement if your telephone number has changed.





ABOVE: Hillsborough Office Employees

Food & Toy Drive '11

Thanks to the generosity of Piedmont Electric employees and members, some less fortunate in our communities had a touch of Christmas this year.

The Food & Toy Drive was once again a success. A new dimension was added with the donation of coats for older children from funds collected.

Social Services Departments in Orange, Person and Caswell distributed the toys donated in their respective counties, and local food services shared the food collected. This included Orange Churches in Mission and the Christian Help Center in Roxboro.



Caswell Office



Roxboro Office

Statement of Nondiscrimination

Piedmont Electric Membership Corporation is the recipient of Federal financial assistance from the Rural Utilities Service, an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and is subject to the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, and the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture's policy, this organization is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, or disability. The person responsible for coordinating this compliance effort is Tim McAdoo, Vice President of Human Resources. To file a complaint of discrimination, write to: USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call 800.795.3272 or 866.632.9992 (voice or TDD). Both the USDA and Piedmont Electric Membership Corporation are equal opportunity providers and employers.



Pass It On...

This month's recipe comes from Magnolia Clayton of Timberlake.

If you have a favorite recipe you want to share with other Piedmont Electric members, please send it to: Pass It On, c/o Piedmont Connection, P.O. Drawer 1179, Hillsborough, NC 27278, or you may include it with your monthly payment.

If your recipe is printed in the newsletter, you will receive a copy of a cookbook from the Cooperative Council of N. C. Please remember to check all ingredients and cooking directions.

Persimmon Pudding

- 3 cups sugar
- 2 sticks margarine or butter
- 3 eggs
- 1 14-ounce can Eagle Brand milk
- 2 cups persimmon pulp
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 3 cups self-rising flour

Cream sugar and butter until fluffy; add eggs, one at a time, alternating with flour, then milk and persimmon pulp.

Add vanilla and cinnamon. Mix well. Pour into a large well-greased baking dish. Bake at 325 degrees for one hour, or until cake leaves pan. Yields 15-20 servings.



February Right-of-Way Maintenance

Orange County:

Bethel Hickory Grove Church Road
Highway 54 West
Neville Road
Hatch Road
Jones Ferry Road
(and surrounding areas)
Locations subject to change due to uncontrollable circumstances

Co-op Provides Opportunities for Young People



Basketball Camps

Two lucky young people in the Cooperative's

service area will be selected for basketball camp scholarships for this summer.

Sponsored by North Carolina's Touchstone Energy cooperatives, the basketball camps are for students entering sixth, seventh and eighth grades.

Touchstone Energy is offering female students the opportunity to apply for a scholarship to the Kellie Harper Wolfpack Basketball Academy on the campus of N.C. State University.

Male students can apply for a scholarship to attend the Roy Williams Carolina Basketball Camp, which is scheduled for June 16—20 at UNC—Chapel Hill. The dates for the Kellie Harper camp are not available at this writing. Visit www.ncelectriccooperatives.com to learn more.

The deadline for students to apply to either camp is Friday, March 30, 2012.

Youth Tour to D.C.



Applications for this year's Rural Electric Youth Tour to Washington, DC, are due March 31, 2012.

Piedmont Electric is sponsoring the expense-paid trip to the nation's capital for a local rising high school junior or senior whose parents are served by the Co-op.

The trip is set for the week of June 16-22, 2012, and is coordinated through our statewide organization. Interested students should visit Piedmont Electric's website for further information at www.pemc.coop.

Four Scholarships Available

Once again Piedmont Electric will offer four \$1,000 scholarships for continuing education to high school seniors in our service area who are planning to attend a four-year college or technical school.

The eligibility requirements for a scholarship are as follows:

- Applicant's parent must be a member of Piedmont Electric.
- One scholarship winner per family per year.
- Applicant is a qualified high school senior planning to continue his/her education at an accredited community college, university or technical school.

• Applicants must submit:
—Completed application form, available at www.pemc.coop (Go to Schools and Community/Scholarship Application)

—Copy of college acceptance letter and copies of ACT or SAT
—Official high school transcript listing courses taken and grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.0

Also, applicants should have participated in high school or outside extracurricular activities and in at least one community-related volunteer project.

—Submission of a letter of reference from teacher, counselor, employer or community person, and a short essay written by applicant on the topic: "Describe your rural electric cooperative and how it differs from other businesses" are also required.

Financial need is not a criterion for the scholarship.

Judging is by an independent panel based on a 100% grading scale weighted as follows:

- Scholastic Achievement 45%

- Extracurricular Activities 20%
- Essay Content 35%



The deadline for applications is no later than 4:30 p.m. on March 31, 2012.

Applications will not be considered unless all of the required information is complete and received as specified.

Immediate family members of Piedmont Electric employees, its subsidiary employees and Board of Directors are ineligible.

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Hillsborough: **919.732.2123** • Caswell County: **336.421.1296**

Roxboro: **336.599.0151** • Elsewhere in North Carolina: **800.222.3107**

To report an outage 24 hours a day: **800.449.2667***

To access account information 24 hours a day: **800.548.2105***

*Voice instructions will direct you through the system.

Call BEFORE You Dig: **800.632.4949 or 811**

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Cathy J. Johnson, CCC, Editor