



# Piedmont Electric CONNECTION

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative



Hillsborough, N.C.

www.pemc.coop

May 2011

## Lower Charges Are Set for Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency Rates

The following N.C. Renewable Energy Rider charges are effective May 1, 2011, and will be in effect for 12 months:

Residential	\$ 0.32/monthly
Commercial	\$ 1.61/monthly
Industrial	\$16.13/monthly

### Replaces:

Residential	\$ 0.41/monthly
Commercial	\$ 2.04/monthly
Industrial	\$20.44/monthly

The following N.C. Energy Efficiency Rider charges are effective May 1, 2011, and will be in effect for 12 months:

Residential	0.0792¢/kWh
Commercial/Ind.	0.0237¢/kWh

### Replaces:

Residential	0.1361¢/kWh
Commercial/Ind.	0.1174¢/kWh

Decrease in these Riders are due to costs being lower than forecasted.



Piedmont Electric and ElecTel CCU will be closed Monday, May 30, in observance of Memorial Day. Employees will be on call. Please have a safe Memorial Day.

## May Is Electrical Safety Month

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, nearly 400 people in the United States are electrocuted each year.

The loss of life, injuries and economic losses caused by electrical hazards can be reduced with education and awareness, which is why North Carolina's electric cooperatives recognize May as Electrical Safety Month.

Electricity, once considered a luxury, is now considered a necessity for most Americans. Taking this convenience for granted can be deadly.

Take time this month to look for possible electrical hazards around your home, workplace and outdoor areas.

- Electrical outlets should not be overloaded; too many items plugged into one outlet are a fire hazard to you and your home.
- Be sure that all electrical outlets have safety covers, especially if children are present in the household.

• Check your electrical cords regularly for frays, cracks or kinks and replace them immediately if damaged.

• Look for a certification label from an independent testing lab such as UL (Underwriters Laboratories) or ETL (Electrical Testing Laboratories) on products and packages.

• For extension cords, look for an attached certification label on the cord near the plug.

• For power strips and surge protectors, inspect the underside

of the casing and make certain it is marked with the manufacturer's name and the testing lab.

- Make sure all wiring in your home is secure and constructed correctly.
- When unplugging an appliance, pull by the plug, not the cord.
- Stay away from downed power lines and assume they are energized. Call 911 or your electric cooperative immediately to report any downed lines.



## THE FAIRNESS TEST

Q: What type of company provides services at cost, and offers a return on surplus revenue?

- a) A non-profit
- b) A cooperative
- c) A member-owned company
- d) All of the above

(See answer on page 23)



## From Your President...

# Energy Issues Harken Back to the 70s

*R. G. Brecheisen*

*President & Chief Executive Officer*

If “The Sting” were back in theaters and The Sonny and Cher Show was once again a popular variety show, it would look a lot like 1973 all over again.

Today’s lines and prices at gasoline stations certainly harken back to those days.

Some of you will remember the energy crisis of the 1970s. Some are too young to remember. But it’s important to recall the lessons of 1973, because we may soon face another energy shortfall.

Here are the similarities:

- Prior to both 1973 and today, we enjoyed periods of low-cost energy, and our high use levels reflected that.

- In 1973, gas-guzzling vehicles were standard on our nation’s roads. Today, low-efficiency SUVs crowd our highways.

- In both 1973 and today, we experienced an increasing dependence on foreign oil imports.

- In 1973, the world was experiencing political unrest and economic instabilities across the globe. Today, the situation is much the same. Only the locations are different.

- Low cost and high availability of energy made us complacent about conservation in the early seventies and in the first years of the 21st century.

With the similarities of these two eras, almost 40 years apart, it might do us good to examine the lessons we learned from the 1973 energy crisis and apply and adapt them for today.

In the 1970s, low fuel costs and high availability lulled us into a false sense of security. Energy

conservation was not a priority, because an energy crisis was inconceivable.

In 2011, we know that an energy crisis is indeed possible, and so we must all work together to use energy more wisely.

This responsibility extends to everyone—from the lawmakers who set energy policy to the utilities, such as your cooperative, who plan to meet your long-range energy needs, and to individual businesses and consumers.

We all have an important role to play.

In the decade or two following the energy crisis of the 70’s, automobile manufacturers turned out high fuel-efficiency vehicles and Americans, fresh from the deprivation of the gas-rationing period, bought these vehicles in droves. And it worked. The availability of gasoline rose.

But we humans have short memories, and before long, we indulged our travel experience with roomier and more powerful vehicles. Thus was born the SUV, which dominates our roadways today.

Here at Piedmont Electric, we are doing everything possible to keep your electricity affordable, by automating operations where possible and by setting reasonable budgets that do not sacrifice reliability and service.

We have no control, however, over the market price of fuels needed to generate electricity. The cost of fuels such as natural gas and coal are holding steady at the moment, but could soon begin to escalate.

Do we need to conserve electricity? Of course. Will that alone solve the energy crisis? Absolutely not. Conservation of electricity is just one avenue for managing energy costs. We must all conserve energy in other ways.

Does this mean we should all get rid of our SUVs? Not necessarily. But we can save fuel by avoiding unnecessary trips, combining errands and sharing rides to work.

Elsewhere in this issue, we offer tips for conserving electricity. Just remember, we all need to conserve energy of all types—from gasoline, to natural gas, to propane.

Many types of fuel make up our nation’s energy picture and affect our pocketbooks.

Piedmont Electric will continue looking out for you. You can help us keep costs affordable by looking for ways to conserve all types of energy, not just electricity.

*R. G. Brecheisen*

## May Right-of-Way Maintenance



### *Person County*

Fontaine Road  
Olive Branch Road  
Dirgie Mine Road  
Lawson Chapel Church Road

### *Caswell County*

John Oakley Road  
Egypt Road  
Ridgeville Road  
Russell Loop Road  
(And surrounding areas)

# Summer's Coming! Are You and Your Home Ready?



Don't let warmer weather turn into "summertime blues" when your monthly electric bill arrives.

Here are some energy-saving tips from Piedmont Electric.

- *Adjust the thermostat.* As [TogetherWeSave.com](http://TogetherWeSave.com) demonstrates, lowering a thermostat in winter can save as much as \$85 per year.

During warmer months, raising the thermostat a few degrees can save money, too. Set the temperature between 78-80 degrees, and you could save up to 8% on monthly cooling bills.

- *Programmable thermostats* make it easy to save by offering pre-programmed settings to regulate a home's temperature throughout the year.

- *Be a "fan-atic."* While they

don't replace air conditioners or heat pumps, fans move air and help you feel more comfortable.

On milder days, fans can save as much as 60% on electric bills. Fans cool people, not rooms, so turn them off when you leave.

- *Regular maintenance is essential.* Piedmont Electric recommends that members have their HVAC systems serviced annually by a certified technician.

The HVAC professional will check your entire system to make sure it runs efficiently. This will help to extend life of the system and save money.

- *Look for ENERGY STAR equipment.* When it's time to replace your cooling system, [TogetherWeSave.com](http://TogetherWeSave.com) recommends replacing it with an ENERGY STAR-qualified model. Doing so could reduce your energy costs by as much as 30%.

Tax credits and rebates on qualifying ENERGY STAR appliances may be available so check with

Piedmont Electric energy specialists for more information.

- *Bigger isn't always better.* Too often, cooling equipment isn't sized properly and leads to higher electric bills. A unit that's too large for your home will not cool evenly and might produce higher humidity indoors.

Ensure that a load calculation is performed to determine proper sizing of equipment.

- *Take advantage of MyUsage.com* to monitor your daily energy use. That way, if your system starts using more energy you will learn about it before you get your monthly bill.

- Instead of getting burned this summer by high energy bills, visit [energysavers.gov](http://energysavers.gov), OR Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives energy-saving website, [TogetherWeSave.com](http://TogetherWeSave.com), for more money-saving ideas.

Or, call the energy experts at Piedmont Electric.

Answer from page 21

## IT'S A MATTER OF FAIRNESS

Piedmont Electric is that kind of company, and the answer is *d) ALL of the above.*

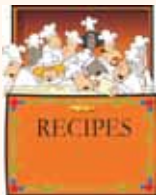
Piedmont Electric is here to turn things around and give you more than you expect. Here are just a few good reasons to be excited about being a member of Piedmont Electric. Because we're a non-profit, we can offer members electricity at cost. As a cooperative, we have a strong network of support. And as a member, your service payments entitle you to a percentage of ownership, a vote in our business dealings and a share in surplus revenue. In 2009 alone, North Carolina's Touchstone Energy cooperatives made payments to members statewide of \$31.3 million. We're proud to deliver numbers like that!

### The 7 Cooperative Principles

- *Voluntary & Open Membership*
- *Democratic Member Control*
- *Members' Economic Participation*
- *Autonomy & Independence*
- *Education, Training & Information*
- *Cooperation among Cooperatives*
- *Concern for Community*

## Pass It

This month's recipe for "Easy Peach Wine Cake" comes from Marian Moss of Bullock.



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 it 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.

### Easy Peach Wine Cake

- 1 box peach\* Jello
- 1 box white cake mix
- 4 eggs
- 1 cup oil
- 1 cup peach\* wine
- 1 cup chopped nuts

Grease bundt pan and put one cup chopped nuts in bottom of pan and up the sides. Combine remaining ingredients. Pour cake batter in pan and bake at 325° for 50 minutes.

**Glaze:** Combine two cups powdered sugar with 1/3 cup wine.\*

Pour glaze over hot cake in the pan. Save half of the glaze to pour over the top of the cake after removing it from the pan.

\* Note: You may substitute blackberry Jello/blackberry wine OR strawberry Jello/strawberry wine for the peach Jello/peach wine.

## DO YOU PLAN TO BUY AN ELECTRIC VEHICLE?

Please contact the Cooperative if you plan to buy an electric vehicle that will be charged at your home or business served by Piedmont EMC. We need to ensure the distribution transformer and conductors are adequately sized to serve this added load and that no safety issues exist.

## Teachers, Get Your Bright Ideas Ready!

Summer vacation from school will be here and gone before you know it, and teachers should remember that Bright Ideas Grant applications will be due not long after school starts again in the Fall!

The primary elements of the online application process include an explanation of the project and its creative elements, as well as its potential benefits to students.

A sample application and contact information for program coordinators are available on the Bright Ideas website, [www.ncbrightideas.com](http://www.ncbrightideas.com).



## By the Numbers...

- 1,727 members have signed up for the use monitoring portion of [MyUsage.com](http://MyUsage.com)
- 564 members are participating in the FlexPay Program
- 404 members have turned in receipts for 4,055 CFLs, representing a total of 1,390,865 kWhs saved toward our Senate Bill 3 Mandate
- 27 solar water heater rebates given to members
- 789 electric water heater wraps sold
- 543 residential members on Time-of-Day Rates

## When Your Power Goes Out



When your power goes out, call Piedmont Electric's outage reporting number: 800.222.3107 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.



**What are you waiting for?  
Sign up for  
MyUsage.com!**

## Piedmont Electric CONNECTION

Published monthly for the members of Piedmont Electric Membership Corp.  
2500 N.C. Highway 86 South, P. O. Drawer 1179, Hillsborough, N.C. 27278

**R. G. Brecheisen**, President & CEO

### DIRECTORS:

**Richard C. Roberts**, Chairman  
**C. Franklin Murphy**, Vice Chairman  
**Douglas Simmons**, Secretary  
**H. James Kinley**, Treasurer  
**Paul L. Bailey, Bill R. Barber**  
**David Poythress, Richal Vanhook**  
**Sam T. Woods & Talmadge W. Yancey**

\*\*\*

**Office Hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.,  
Monday—Friday**

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**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative  
Cathy J. Johnson, CCC, Editor