



Piedmont Electric

# CONNECTION

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative



Hillsborough, N.C.

www.pemc.coop

September 2011

## What Are Degree Days?

When the weather is extremely hot or cold, you may hear the term “degree days” used in reference to outside temperatures.

Degree days are essentially a simplified representation of outside air-temperature data. They are widely used in the energy industry for calculations relating to the effect of outside air temperature on building energy use.

“Cooling degree days” (CDD) are a measure of how much (in degrees), and for how long (in days), outside air temperature was higher than a specific base temperature of 65 degrees.

This summer has proven to be hotter than last summer with 11 more CDD in June/July than last year. If you are interested in learning more about degree days, visit [www.degree-days.net](http://www.degree-days.net).



## HOG DAY 2011

Piedmont Electric’s booth was a busy place during this year’s Hog Day activities in Hillsborough. Cooperative employees Chuck Lee (center) and Rachel Hawkins (right) passed out many energy-saving message fans to those attending the event. Piedmont Electric members—and others—stopped by to ask questions and gather information on cooperative programs.



## STANDING ROOM ONLY...

There was standing room only when employees, members and neighbors lined up for the community blood drive held at Piedmont Electric’s Hillsborough office. Thirty volunteers showed up to donate during this crucial drive. Many thanks to everyone who donated the “gift of life” at this most recent drive.

## YOU CAN DIM EFFICIENT LIGHTS

You’ve probably heard the news by now. U.S. retailers will soon begin switching out traditional incandescent lightbulbs with more efficient options.

Under the federal Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, all general-purpose lightbulbs that produce 310 to 2,600 lumens of light must be between 25% and 30% more energy efficient than current incandescent bulbs between 2012 and 2014.

While the law does not mandate the replacement of incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent lamps (CFL), CFLs remain the most widely available technology that can meet the law’s provisions.

As consumers start to rely more heavily on CFLs, they will encounter a number of misconceptions about them—myths that the Electric Power Research Institute

(EPRI), a non-profit research consortium made up of electric utilities, including electric cooperatives, wants to dispel. Here are the top CFL myths:

**Myth #1. CFLs cannot be used in 3-way fixtures.**

Several manufacturers have developed 3-way CFLs that provide performance equivalent to traditional 3-way incandescent lamps and also operate in standard 3-way sockets. These 3-way CFLs are available at most retailers that carry lightbulbs.

As with incandescent bulbs, 3-way CFLs are offered in a variety of wattage and light output combinations.

Different manufacturers use slightly different wattages and lamp designs to match the output of traditional 3-way incandescent bulbs,

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## From Your President...

# Electric Cars Are on the Way...

R. G. Brecheisen

President & Chief Executive Officer

In July, Raleigh was the location for this year's national plug-in electric car conference. Attendees included representatives from auto manufacturers, electric utility companies, charging station manufacturers, state and national policy makers among others.

The consensus was that plug-in electric cars are going to become more common. Auto manufacturers and industry analysts estimated that about 6% of the cars on the road would be plug-in electric cars by 2020. Five major car manufacturers will be offering plug-in cars this year.

This growth will be driven by the significant savings in fuel cost and the lesser impact on the environment.

The impact these cars would have on the Cooperative depends on the number of cars on Piedmont's system, the type of chargers the majority of customers use and the time of day they are plugged in.

Many of our members commute from their homes in our service territory to work in the Triangle. This 20-30 mile commute would be ideal for an electric plug-

in car as most have about a 100 mile range.

Members would drive the car for their daily commute and then plug the car in overnight to recharge.

Plug-in car chargers have three different capacities for charging; 1.4 kW, 3.3 kW and 6.2 kW. The greater the capacity of the charger, the faster the car will charge—but the more the charger installation will cost and the greater impact on Piedmont's system.

There are numerous chargers available on the market which vary in capabilities. Piedmont recommends that you consider chargers which allow you to program the time when power costs are at their lowest.

The smaller capacity chargers should not create any problems for Piedmont's distribution system, but as they get bigger, we could have some problems if the cars are charged on peak and several cars are clustered in the same area.

Keeping us informed about your plug-in car purchase can help us make sure Piedmont's distribution equipment that feeds your home has the right capacity to

accommodate the size of charger you are planning to buy and could avoid any unpleasant surprises.

• • •

To say this has been an extremely hot summer would be something of an understatement.

And with extreme weather comes higher electricity use as many of us stay indoors to try to beat the heat.

Piedmont Electric has several programs to help you make better use of the electricity you buy, including free home energy audits, FlexPay payment program, and the websites [MyUsage.com](http://MyUsage.com) and [TogetherWeSave.com](http://TogetherWeSave.com).

Our Energy Specialists are also available to make recommendations for improving and/or upgrading your home's heating and cooling system as well as adding insulation for energy efficiency.

Piedmont Electric also has a rebate program for those who want to install energy efficient heat pumps and electric water heaters.

Qualified members may also take advantage of low interest loans for making improvements to the energy efficiency of your home.

Please contact the Cooperative if you want to take advantage of one or more of these programs.

## By the Numbers...

- 1,950 members have signed up for the use monitoring portion of [www.MyUsage.com](http://www.MyUsage.com)
- 616 members are participating in the FlexPay Program
- 426 members have turned in receipts for 4,210 CFLs, representing a total of 1,444,030 kWhs saved toward our Senate Bill 3 Mandate
- 28 solar water heater rebates given to members
- 793 electric water heater wraps sold
- 546 residential members on Time-of-Day Rates
- 589 visits to [TogetherWeSave.com](http://TogetherWeSave.com) for a total calculated savings with the home savings calculator tool of \$236,378.51

## Coming Soon...

The Energy Star® Tax Holiday Weekend is coming November 4-6, 2011. See more in next month's newsletter!

# YOU CAN DIM EFFICIENT LIGHTS AND OTHER MYTHS

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and consumers are encouraged to try different 3-way CFLs to find designs and output levels that best suit their needs.

**Myth #2. Dimmable CFLs do not work with standard light dimmers.**

While dimmable CFLs are available today, not all dimmable CFLs are compatible with all dimmers. Also,

dimmable CFLs have different dimming ranges, with some dimming from 100 to 10%, and some from 90 to 30%.

Incandescent lamps are frequently dimmed with standard electronic light dimmers—rotary, slide or touch dimmers.

Dimmable CFLs that specify “true dimmability” are most likely to be compatible with most rotary or programmable dimmers.

Before purchasing large quantities of dimmable CFLs, conduct a simple table-top test to determine



CFL-to-dimmer compatibility, including acceptable dimming range.

**Myth #3. Dimmable CFLs are hard to find.**

Dimmable CFLs are becoming more widely available as incandescent bulbs are phased out, though in smaller inventories than traditional non-dimmable CFLs.

Dimmable CFLs will capture a growing share of the market and bring new

options, such as incorporating the dimming control directly in the CFL base, eliminating the need for a 3-way socket or wall-mounted dimmer.

**Myth #4. CFLs do not last as long as advertised.**

As with other electronic products, a CFL's lifespan is affected by its use. If installed properly, a CFL offers energy savings and longer life than incandescent lamps. To avoid cracking the CFL glass, consumers should hold the CFL by its plastic base when screwing it into a lamp socket.

Installing CFLs in recessed can fixtures not rated for its use will

likely shorten the lamp's life. Most reflector type CFLs are rated for use in cans, and some twist-lamp CFLs can be used in cans. Package labeling specifies whether a CFL can be used in recessed cans, and consumers should read packaging closely to determine suitability for this use.

The life of a CFL also depends on how frequently the consumer turns it on and off. Some manufacturers now list the recommended average number of daily switchings along with the rated number of operating hours.

Switching on a CFL more frequently than the recommended average can shorten its life. Consumers who use CFLs with occupancy sensors will want to buy CFLs with the longest life rating.

When installed properly in appropriate fixtures, CFLs reduce operating costs by reducing energy consumption.



What are you waiting for?

Sign up for [MyUsage.com!](http://MyUsage.com)

And while you're at it, check out the free new smart phone app, [TogetherWeSave.com!](http://TogetherWeSave.com)



## Is an Electric Car in Your Future?

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

## If Your Power Goes Out, Call Us...

When 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.



# Is Your Home Well Insulated?

Is there enough insulation in your attic? By adding insulation, you can improve your home's energy efficiency and save money.

Here's a tip that can help reduce your energy consumption—and your electric bills.

With adequate attic insulation, your home's heating/cooling system will operate more efficiently. It will keep you cooler in the summer and warmer in winter—and it will keep more money in your wallet.

As [TogetherWeSave.com](http://TogetherWeSave.com) has shown, adding insulation to your attic can save you \$240 a year.

Older homes tend to have less attic insulation than newer ones. An energy audit can indicate whether additional insulation is needed.

Before adding insulation to your attic, determine how much insulation is already installed, what kind it is, and how thick it is.

Next, you'll need to know the



R-value—which indicates the insulation's resistance to heat—of existing attic insulation. The higher the R-value, the greater the insulating effectiveness.

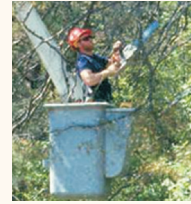
Once you know the R-value, you can determine how much insulation to add by using the U.S. Department of Energy's Zip

Code Insulation Program.

Now you're ready to decide what kind of insulation to install: loose-fill or blanket (batt and roll) insulation. Loose-fill insulation consists of small particles of fiber, foam or other materials.

Blanket insulation, the most common and widely available type of insulation, comes in the form of batts and rolls made from mineral wool, plastic fibers and natural fibers.

Loose-fill insulation is usually less expensive to install than batt insulation. And when installed properly, loose-fill insulation can provide better coverage.



## September Right-of-Way Maintenance

### Person County:

Surl-Mt. Tirzah Road  
Jim Latta Road  
Chandler Road  
Antioch Church Road  
Mollie-Mooney Road  
(and surrounding areas)

Locations are subject to change due to uncontrollable circumstances.

*Piedmont Electric & ElecTel Credit Union will be closed Monday, September 5, in observance of Labor Day. Employees will be on call.*

## Piedmont Electric CONNECTION

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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

## Pass On Your Favorite Recipe

This month's recipe for "Cream Cheese Pound Cake" comes from Barbara Hilbard of Hillsborough.

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.



### CREAM CHEESE POUND CAKE

- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 3 sticks margarine             | 1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla                          |
| 1 8-ounce package cream cheese | 6 large eggs                                     |
| 3 cups sugar                   | 3 cups sifted cake flour (sift before measuring) |
| Dash of salt                   |  |

Cream margarine, cream cheese and sugar until fluffy. Add salt and vanilla and beat well. Add eggs, one at a time. Stir in flour. Spoon mixture into greased and floured tube pan.

Bake at 300 degrees for 1-1/2 hours, or until cake tests done.