



FEATURE ARTICLE

TIPS FOR A SAFE (AND ENERGY-EFFICIENT) HOLIDAY SEASON

The holidays are upon us. For many, that means celebrations with friends and family, travel, decorations, cooking and shopping. We want to help you keep those holiday lights burning bright all while saving a little extra green for those last minute gift ideas. Here are a few tips to help you manage your energy use and keep everyone safe as you gear up for the season.

In the Kitchen

- Never leave cooking equipment unattended, and always turn off burners if you leave the room.
- Keep the oven door closed when in use. Every time the door is opened, the temperature inside is reduced by as much as 25 degrees, forcing it to use more energy to get back to the proper cooking temperature.
- Cook rolls in the toaster oven and try to take advantage of smaller appliances like crock pots, microwaves and warming plates, which can use up to half the energy of a stove.
- Grab leftovers from the fridge and quickly close the door as cold air is escaping from your refrigerator while you're hunting for a snack.

Decorating for the Holidays

- Take time to carefully inspect all your holiday decorations to ensure that everything is in safe, working order. Pay attention to damaged wires, broken bulbs and corroded metal parts.
- Decorate with LED lights, which use less energy and last up to 10 times longer than traditional incandescent bulbs.
- All holiday lights should be placed on a timer and set to turn on at sunset and off a few hours later, typically around bedtime.
- Tinsel and other reflective decorations help your lights shine brighter while garlands and wreaths make a home festive without using electricity.
- Let your Christmas tree shine. Turning off other lights in the room helps the tree stand out while saving energy.

IMPORTANT DATES

**DEC
23 & 26**

Christmas observed

Our offices will be closed for the holiday. Employees will be on call.

**JAN
1**

Youth Tour application due

For more info, visit PEMC.coop/community

**JAN
2**

New Year's Day observed

Our offices will be closed for the holiday. Employees will be on call.

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BEWARE OF SCAMS

Falling for a scam could prove very expensive. Keep these tips in mind to avoid being scammed:

- Piedmont Electric will NEVER call and ask for sensitive personal information over the phone.
- Piedmont Electric employees visit a home in person only in response to a service request. If a service call has not been scheduled or requested, do not allow the person to enter your house.
- When in doubt, call us at 800.222.3107.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Thank you to all our members! You are the reason why this year, and every year at Piedmont Electric, is wonderful. That being said, this past year will go down as a particularly memorable one.

Hurricane Matthew rocked our state in October, knocking out power for many North Carolinians. After quickly restoring power in our communities, 12 Piedmont Electric linemen went to assist restoration efforts at Central EMC in Lee County before heading to South Carolina to help members at Santee Electric Cooperative.

This year we had a lot of good news as well. By participating in energy-saving programs like Beat the Peak, Load Management and Time-of-Day rates, Piedmont Electric members helped save the co-op more than \$6 million in power costs since 2013.

As a result, our members have enjoyed a rate reduction since January 2016, having saved an average of 5.6 percent on the monthly energy component of their bill.

In addition to providing members with ways to better control their energy use and thus their electric bills, this year we also offered a new way for members to support solar energy.

In April, we opened the largest community solar program in

Looking back keeps us grounded as we move ahead

North Carolina and began offering subscriptions to members, which provides a low cost, low risk way for our members to be involved with solar energy.

While our member-focused mission remains the same, this year saw changes to our leadership team as Glennie Beasley joined the board of directors in May, and I took over as president and chief executive officer in July.

Our predecessors left behind a strong legacy upon which we continue to build. Each day, every member of the Piedmont Electric team strives to enhance the quality of life in the communities we serve at a good value to our members by providing you with affordable, reliable and



Stephen B. Hamlin
President & CEO of Piedmont Electric
Membership Corporation

environmentally responsible electricity.

This member-first approach will serve us well in 2017 and the years ahead as we recognize that we are in the midst of rapid change in our industry. New technology, renewable energy and dynamic member expectations are changing the way we do business.

Take comfort in knowing that your local co-op will continue to keep your best interests at heart and stay true to our mission while facing these industry changes head on.

As the year comes to a close, I thank you for being a member of Piedmont Electric. We wish you a joyous holiday season and a safe and prosperous New Year.

HELP US RETURN MONEY TO MEMBERS

Each December we return capital credits to members, including \$1.25 million this year!

Piedmont Electric is a not-for-profit electric cooperative, which means that when we collect more funds than we need to operate, we gladly return those funds to our members.

For individuals receiving capital credits and who are active members, we simply credit their bill or send them a check, but for those who are no longer members, things can get complicated.

When we are unable to track down a former member within four years, we are required by law to turn the money over to the state of North Carolina's escheat fund.

That's where you can help!

Visit **PEMC.coop/capitalcredit** to see if you or anyone you know has unclaimed capital credits.

Tell your friends, family and neighbors, and help us return these capital credits!



Visit PEMC.coop/capitalcredit to see if you have unclaimed capital credits.

An illustration of Santa Claus wearing his traditional red suit and hat, but also wearing sunglasses and relaxing on a green and white striped lounge chair on a sandy beach. A palm tree with green fronds is to his right, and the ocean with blue waves is in the background under a sunset sky with a large orange sun.

Give the gift of
**ENERGY
SAVINGS**

Energy Savings Gift Guide

Give Santa a break this year and give one of these gifts that keeps on giving! These ideas can help you save energy and money. Here are a few of our favorites:

COMMUNITY SOLAR SUBSCRIPTION

You can still subscribe to our community solar project and support solar energy. For a small monthly fee, you will receive credit for the output of the solar panels you leased on your monthly bill and feel good knowing that you are supporting renewable energy.

CROCK POT

Not only are these slow-cooking devices convenient for busy families, but they use less energy than a traditional stove or oven.

PROGRAMMABLE THERMOSTAT

Programmable thermostats are a fantastic way to save money on an energy bill. The newest models even allow you to monitor and adjust your energy usage from your mobile device, so you are always in control of your thermostat!

HAND-CRANK FLASHLIGHT

A hand-cranked flashlight is powered by the muscle power of the person using it. This is perfect for emergency situations where fresh batteries or electricity to charge a traditional flashlight are unavailable.

BLANKETS, SWEATERS AND SOCKS

One of the easiest ways to save energy in the winter is to turn down the heat! Blankets keep you and your family warm enough to keep your thermostat set at a lower temperature.

"WHEN" YOU USE ENERGY CAN BE AS IMPORTANT AS "HOW MUCH"

BEAT THE PEAK + LOAD MANAGEMENT

There's a saying that "timing is everything." Well when it comes to electricity, that saying holds true.

A key component of how much it costs us to provide you with electricity is what is known as the peak, the time period when we are using the most electricity.

Typically the peak occurs on cold winter mornings or hot summer afternoons. For the fall and winter months (October–April), our peak occurs between 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. each morning.

So what can you do? Join the thousands of members who are helping us keep rates low by joining Beat the Peak and our other programs, which help us lower our peak.

- **Text Message / Email Alerts** – Inform you when peak demand is expected, so you can take measures, such as adjusting the thermostat, postponing hot water use, delaying running major appliances and turning off unneeded lights and electronics.
- **Air Conditioner Management** – Get paid to allow the cooperative to cycle down your air conditioning unit to save energy. We will turn off the cooling unit for your unit for short periods of time to reduce energy use.
- **Water Heater Management** – Allow Piedmont Electric to control your water heater during peak times. This option not only pays for your enrollment, but most members don't

even notice because of the reserve of hot water in your hot water heater.

For more information, including rates and a signup form, visit pemc.coop and search "beat the peak."

YOUTH PROGRAM APPLICATION DEADLINE

YOUTH TOUR
JANUARY 1, 2017



FOR MORE INFO, VISIT
PEMC.COOP/COMMUNITY

PIEDMONT ELECTRIC CONNECTION

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Piedmont Electric is an
equal opportunity provider
and employer.

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President and CEO

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IF YOUR POWER GOES OUT, CALL US AT 800.449.2667

Our automated outage reporting system uses your phone number to determine your service location.

That's why it's important to update the number connected to your account. If your number has changed, let us know by completing the form that comes with your monthly bill or by calling 800.222.3107.

Pay account and access account information by phone 24 hours a day by calling 877.999.3394. Voice instructions will direct you through the system.