



FEATURE ARTICLE

PEMC ANNOUNCES COMMUNITY SOLAR PROGRAM

Piedmont Electric is excited to announce our community solar program. This project represents a lower cost (and lower risk) way for many of our members to get involved with solar technology. In fact, it is one of the few ways renters can invest in solar panels.

Solar power is one of the fastest growing sources of alternative energy in the United States. According to the Solar Energy Industries Association, there are now over 22,700 MW of cumulative solar electric capacity operating in the United States – that’s enough to power more than 4.6 million average American homes. North Carolina has been active in the solar arena, coming in third in the nation for solar panel capacity installed as of 2013. Piedmont Electric is committed to exploring these emerging energy generation and distribution methods, which led to the development of our community solar program.

The idea behind community solar is simple: Piedmont Electric had a solar developer build two solar fields; one at each district office in Roxboro and Caswell. The solar fields have over 1,800 panels, which can generate

up to 3,000 kWhs of electricity each day, enough to power 70 average American homes for a day.

Individual members can subscribe to as many as 15 solar panels directly from Piedmont Electric for an affordable monthly fee. We then credit the member’s power bill for any energy that the panel creates. It’s just like having a solar panel on your home, but without the major expenses, home renovation and maintenance associated with traditional residential solar.

Members who wish to enroll in the community solar program or would like more information can call 800.222.3107 or visit pemc.coop/community-solar to fill out a form. Program enrollment will begin in April 2016.

IMPORTANT DATES

MAR 31 

Basketball Camp Application Due

Rising 6–8th graders are eligible to apply for this all-expense-paid scholarship to attend summer basketball camp at the University of North Carolina and N.C. State University. Visit pemc.coop to apply.

MAR 31 

High School Senior College Scholarship Deadline

Apply for one of six \$1,500 college scholarships. Applicant must be planning to continue his/her education at a higher education institution and the parent must be a member of Piedmont EMC member. Apply online at pemc.coop.

IMPORTANT DATE CHANGE

APR 8

**Piedmont Electric Annual Meeting
Orange High School, Hillsborough, NC**

Enjoy local musical entertainment by Cody Shuler, special audiovisual presentation and prize drawings! Registration begins at 6pm and business meeting begins at 8pm.

Note: We previously listed in our February newsletter and calendar that the Annual Meeting date was April 22, but the date has changed. See above.

APR 13

**American Red Cross Blood Drive
Hillsborough Office | 11:30AM–3:30PM**

To schedule an appointment, visit www.redcrossblood.org or call 919.644-3402.

SIGN UP FOR THE CONNECTION'S DIGITAL VERSION!



Carolina Country and our newsletter are available on iPads and Android tablets. Visit the App or Play store from your tablet to download the Carolina Country app today.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Today, solar energy is out of reach for a lot of people, much like electricity was over 80 years ago in rural areas and towns. Among other barriers, it can be expensive to set up and maintain. So we thought – just as our founders did decades ago – let's do something about this. It is that same spirit, that Piedmont Electric is proud to announce our community solar project.

Many of our members have expressed interest in renewable energy. And at Piedmont Electric, it's our job to make sure you have reliable, affordable power to take you through your day. Nuclear power and natural gas are important, dependable sources of electricity that we rely on to provide power to you, but solar power can be responsibly incorporated as an energy source too. This community solar project is a more affordable alternative to permanently installing solar equipment on your property and it opens up renewable energy as an option for everyone.

Last December, construction of two solar fields were completed at our Roxboro and Caswell offices. Hannah Solar out of Atlanta, Ga., assisted



R.G. Brecheisen
President & CEO of Piedmont EMC

Now Members Can Tap Into the Power of the Sun

with the installation of the solar photovoltaic (PV) panels, which together, can generate up to 500kW of electricity. We partnered with a solar developer to build these solar fields in our communities as a benefit to our cooperative members. Combined, these solar fields will have more than 1,800 panels which will be available for subscription by Piedmont Electric members as early as April 2016.

Tax incentives and grants provided to the solar developer made this project cost competitive with Piedmont Electric's existing wholesale power cost. The solar developer owns the solar panels and we contract for the

power they produce. In addition, this project will also help us comply with our renewable energy mandate.

Enrollment to subscribe for solar panels will begin in April 2016. We have come a long way since electrifying the countryside over 80 years ago and now Piedmont Electric members can now tap into the power of the sun! For more information about Piedmont EMC's community solar program, contact Jay Berry, Piedmont EMC Energy Specialist at (919) 644-3449 or visit www.pemc.coop.

CO-OP CONNECTIONS® CARD DISCOUNTS

SAVE \$20

TAX ACCOUNTANT, PAULA BROWN

Hillsborough, NC

PAULA OFFERS FULL-SERVICE TAX PREPARATION, ACCOUNTING AND BOOKKEEPING

\$20 OFF TAX PREPARATION FOR FIRST TIME CLIENTS

BOGO

YODER'S COUNTRY MARKET

Blanch, NC

BUY AN ICE CREAM SCOOP, GET ONE FREE SCOOP!

SAVE 10%

BROOKLAND EATS

Roxboro, NC

10% OFF ENTIRE RESTAURANT TAB (EXCLUDES ALCOHOL)

SAVE 10%

FLOWER PATCH

Hillsborough, NC

10% OFF ON CASH-N-CARRY ON FLOWERS, GIFTS, PLANTS, BALLOONS



Co-op Connections® Card Contest

Every month, we hold a drawing for one \$25 Visa Gift Card. To enter, submit your receipt from a local Co-op Connections® business by the 30th of each month and we randomly draw a winner. For contest details, call 800.222.3107 or visit pemc.coop.

Visit Piedmont EMC's website, pemc.coop, and click on the Co-op Connections® Card for discount details and a complete list of participating local businesses, national businesses, dentists, chiropractors, vision care centers and pharmacies.

5 POWER MYTHS

SETTING THEM STRAIGHT

You may have heard a number of “old wives tales” about how to save energy and money around your home. While some of the tips can help your electric bill, some of them can actually *cost* you efficiency, and *raise* your power bill. This month, Piedmont Electric is de-bunking 5 common power myths and giving some better alternatives you can use to make your family more energy efficient.



1

MYTH: Cranking up your thermostat will heat your home faster.

Something in human nature leads homeowners to walk into a frigid house and believe that cranking the thermostat to 85 degrees will somehow heat the home quicker.

REALITY: It doesn't work that way. Think of furnaces like light switches, not dimmers. They are either on or off. The only result of cranking your thermostat will be heating your house beyond a desirable temperature and wasting energy, and money.

HELPFUL TIP: Use a programmable thermostat. You can easily save energy in the winter by setting the thermostat to 68 degrees while you're awake and setting it lower while you're asleep or away from home. You can save up to 1% per year on your heating bill for each degree you set back the thermostat for eight hours, such as when you're sleeping or at work. A 10-degree drop could be 10% savings.

2

MYTH: Computer screen savers save energy, right?

REALITY: Wrong. Screen savers are just another program that consume energy. Switching off your monitor (or the whole computer) is the most effective way to save energy and cut your bill.

3

MYTH: There's nothing you can do to reduce the amount of energy your fridge, freezer and washing machine use.

REALITY: If you adjust your settings, you'll save money.

HELPFUL TIP: Avoid using the coolest setting on your fridge and close the door straightaway – the more hot air gets in, the more energy it needs to cool down again. Also, remember to check the ENERGY STAR rating before buying new appliances.

4

MYTH: TVs, laptops and phone chargers don't use electricity when not in use.

REALITY: Nope. Everyday gadgets and appliances suck up electricity even when idle or on standby mode. The average household spends up to \$100 a year on standby energy. Switch it off!

5

MYTH: LED light bulbs will cost you more.

REALITY: A single LED bulb lasts around 50 times longer than a traditional light bulb. So you could spend a whopping 80% less if you used LEDs rather than traditional bulbs. A single LED light bulb costs around \$13 and will last 5½ and half years (if left running constantly), while the cost of traditional bulbs over that same amount of time would set you back almost \$200.

Switch to **TIME-OF-DAY** rates, and save money throughout the year

Pay a lower rate when you use energy during off-peak hours.



AVOID ON-PEAK WINTER AM HOURS
OCTOBER TO APRIL*

WEEKDAY MORNINGS
6AM-10AM



AVOID ON-PEAK SUMMER PM HOURS
APRIL TO OCTOBER*

WEEKDAY EVENINGS
1PM-6PM

*Excludes weekends and holidays designated by Piedmont Electric.

TIME-OF-DAY PEAK CHANGES IN APRIL

The on-peak and off-peak times change on Sunday in the second full weekends of April and October.

TIME-OF-DAY RATES

Take a moment to think about what hours of the day you spend at home? Perhaps you work the night shift or an irregular shift. Or maybe your house is empty in the mornings and afternoons. If any of these sound like your household, you may be an ideal candidate for Time-of-Day rates from Piedmont Electric.

Time-of-Day Rates save you money when you use energy during off-peak hours.

“Peak” hours are simply the times of weekdays when most people use the most electricity, 6AM-10AM in the winter and 1PM-6PM in the summer. Weekends and holidays are all off-peak hours. When you enroll in Time-of-Day rates, you will be charged a lower than average price for electricity when you use power off-peak, and a different, higher price when you use power during peak hours. For families who are away from the house during peak times, this rate can create savings!

If you are interested in Time-of-Day rates, try out the online tool SmartHub, which offers data that can help you evaluate whether these rates are right for you and your household. You can also get in contact with a Piedmont Electric Energy Specialist

by calling 800.222.3107 for more information and to discuss your options further.

JOIN OUR TIME-OF-DAY RATE PROGRAM!

Include this insert with your next electric bill or call 800.222.3107 and you could see lower bills!

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Phone _____

Is an appointment desired?

Yes No

Best time to call

Morning Afternoon Evening

PIEDMONT ELECTRIC CONNECTION

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2500 NC Highway 86 South
PO Drawer 1179
Hillsborough, NC 27278

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800.222.3107

IF YOUR POWER GOES OUT, CALL US...

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, or if you no longer have a land line, let us know by completing the form that comes in your monthly billing statement or by calling 800.222.3107.

To report an outage 24 hours a day
800.449.2667*

To pay account and access account information by phone 24 hours a day
877.999.3394*

*Voice instructions will direct you through the system.

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Piedmont Electric is an equal opportunity provider and employer.