



FEATURE ARTICLE

Steve Hamlin

President & CEO of Piedmont Electric

## A MESSAGE ABOUT WHOLESALE POWER COSTS

Our wholesale power supplier, Duke Energy /Duke Energy Progress, is asking the North Carolina Utilities Commission (NCUC) for permission to raise its rates to its consumers to help the utility pay for coal ash cleanup in addition to power plant upgrades, new plant construction, recently built solar projects and other infrastructure upgrades.

Piedmont Electric and many other North Carolina electric cooperatives and municipal electric systems are wholesale power customers of Duke. This means we buy power from Duke at wholesale rates and distribute the power to you, our members.

As wholesale customers of Duke, we will see an increase in our power costs based on rate increases likely to be approved by the NCUC. We have been in negotiations and discussions with Duke since the Dan River coal ash spill occurred in 2014 and have worked to create safeguards and other provisions in our power contract that will help mitigate the long term effect on our wholesale power costs.

Along the way, we are anticipating a reduced monthly credit in the wholesale power cost adjustment (WCPA) line item on your bill or potentially a charge during the next several years.

This will occur as Duke bills us for

the work it completes on its coal ash clean-up projects as required by the state legislature and other projects that get approval from the NCUC. The changes in the WCPA charge/credit will be used to pay for the increased cost of wholesale power from Duke with some costs being temporary and some being permanent.

For more than two years, we have used the WCPA to return money to you as a credit on your monthly bill. This is in large part thanks to low natural gas costs and the thousands of Piedmont Electric members who have partnered with us in our peak load reducing programs.

These programs, such as Load Management, Beat the Peak, Time of Day rates, our free energy audits and other energy saving programs are available to you as tools to help reduce your electric bill.

As your cooperative, we are committed to doing everything we can to keep our power costs as low as possible while also delivering superb service to you. In addition, we want to help you save energy and hopefully offset these costs.

Stay tuned for more energy saving tips that can save you money or call us at 800.222.3107 to discuss ways to lower your electric bill.

### IMPORTANT DATES

## AUGUST 17

**American Red Cross Blood Drive At Piedmont Electric Roxboro Office**

Thursday, August 17, from 12:00 - 4:30 pm

## SEPTEMBER 4

**Bright Ideas grant program deadline**  
Teachers are encouraged to apply for a grant to fund innovative class projects. Visit [NCBrightIdeas.com](http://NCBrightIdeas.com) to learn more.

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

### USING TECHNOLOGY TO CUT ENERGY BILLS

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### MONITOR YOUR ENERGY USE

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### TIMERS: FOR MORE THAN JUST HOLIDAY LIGHTS

*Reduce your energy use while staying comfortable.*

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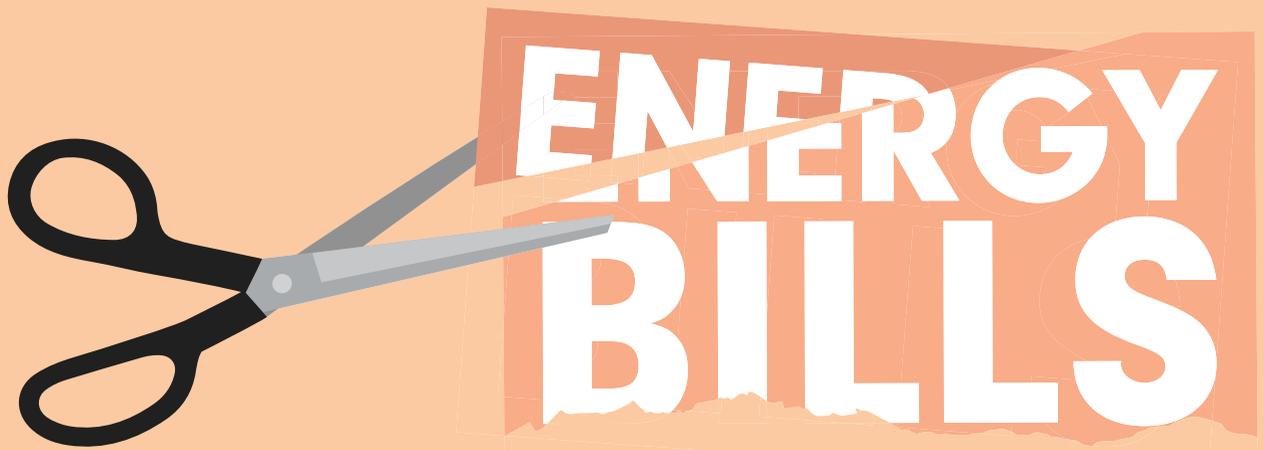


HELPING  
HAND  
FOUNDATION

## Supporting Piedmont Electric's Helping Hand Foundation

Automatic enrollment in the funding of the foundation begins this October! For more information or to opt out of this program, visit [pemc.coop/Helping-Hand-Info](http://pemc.coop/Helping-Hand-Info)

# USING TECHNOLOGY TO CUT



The hot, humid dog-days of summer are here! High outside temperatures mixed with more time spent indoors stirs up a recipe for higher than average energy bills this August. Piedmont Electric wants to make sure that you and your family have all the resources you need to fight high energy bills. Here are four of our favorite high-tech ways you can use to save energy and money:

## LOG INTO SMARTHUB

SmartHub is an online portal for understanding your Piedmont Electric account. From a simple dashboard you can take charge of basic tasks like viewing your bills, managing payments, reporting service issues and reviewing your energy usage. SmartHub allows you to view and monitor your energy usage so that you're never surprised by an energy bill and can take steps to correct issues around your home that cause high bills. Visit [pemc.smarthub.coop](http://pemc.smarthub.coop) to login or activate your account today.

## LED LIGHTING

While LED lighting has been around for years, some homeowners haven't yet invested in these energy-efficient and money-saving bulbs. Traditional incandescent lights not only use more electricity than LED bulbs, but they generate heat in the room that your HVAC unit must cool down. Plus, with today's LED bulb lasting an average of 50 times longer than incandescent bulbs, this new source of light is worth the investment.

## SMART THERMOSTATS

Smart thermostats such as Nest and Ecobee have come a long way. These advanced thermostats monitor and note each time you change the temperature and can even use motion detectors to raise the A/C or turn down the heat while you're away. Over time, the thermostat will learn your preferences and automatically adjust temperatures to provide the most energy-efficient heating and cooling for your family.

## WATER HEATER TIMERS

Many water heaters use electricity to keep water heated all day even though most people only use hot water at certain times of the day. Installing a timer on your water heater can reduce the amount of time spent heating water. Since your water heater is insulated, the water will stay hot even if the unit is not continuously heating the water. You can save energy and money without sacrificing comfort!

## YOUR CO-OP: YOUR ENERGY PARTNER

If you're interested in adding new technology to your home's energy-saving strategy, Piedmont Electric can help! Our knowledgeable representatives can help you make the best decisions for your family. Call 800.222.3107 for more information.



## SAVE \$1 ON EVERY LED

We offer a \$1 rebate for every LED bulb you purchase up to \$15 per year. Visit [pemc.coop](http://pemc.coop) and search "Rebate" to learn more!



At Piedmont Electric, one of our goals is to help you better understand and monitor how you use energy. We're excited to announce the launch of our new email usage alert program designed to help our members better manage their energy use every month. This program consists of email alerts that are sent to your inbox:

### Piedmont Report Email

If you provide us with your email, you will receive a monthly usage overview email. It shows a breakdown of your energy usage from month to month. This provides information on your usage patterns and the effectiveness of your efforts to reduce energy use. If your usage has increased from the previous month, the report details some possible reasons for the increase and includes tips about how to decrease usage over the next month.

### Usage Warning Alerts

The second type of alert you'll receive is a usage warning alert to notify you if there's a spike in your usage. These alerts are most commonly caused by equipment issues in your home. For example, if your air conditioner fan becomes stuck, you might not notice an increase in your energy use if you haven't checked SmartHub recently. In this case, a usage warning alert would be emailed to you so you are aware that there is an issue affecting your energy usage. Usage warning alerts will be sent no more than once a week and are triggered if your usage is significantly higher than yesterday's, last month's, or last year's energy usage.

\*Prepay members can track their usage through account balance alerts from SmartHub. Members can set an amount and when their balance drops below the set level members will receive an alert. Members will continue to receive a daily alert until their balance exceeds the set threshold.

## DAILY USAGE ALERTS

Want even more information on your energy use? SmartHub can send you daily reports. Signing up is easy.

- 1 Log in to SmartHub at [pemc.smarthub.coop](http://pemc.smarthub.coop)
- 2 Select "Notifications" and then select "Manage Contacts" to set up your email address.
- 3 Next, select "Notifications", then "Manage Notifications" and under "Reports" select "Usage Emails".

## TIMERS: FOR MORE THAN JUST HOLIDAY LIGHTS



Electric timers are a holiday decorator's best friend, but have you thought about extending their use past the new year? Timers in your electrical outlets can reduce your phantom energy use and save you money year-round!

Phantom energy (a.k.a. standby power, vampire power, phantom load, ghost load) refers to the way electric power is consumed by your electrical devices while they are switched off. Phantom energy can account for 10 percent of your electricity use.

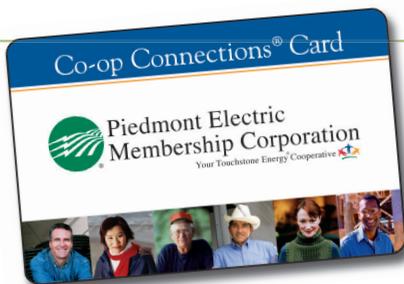
Items that can use phantom energy include:

- Televisions
- Cable boxes
- Gaming consoles
- Speakers
- DVD players
- Streaming devices
- Washers and dryers
- Chargers
- Computers
- Printers
- Kitchen items such as microwaves, blenders, coffee makers and toaster ovens

Don't worry, there's an easy way to reduce your phantom energy use! Think about the devices you use in combination such as the TV, DVD player and DVR, or computer, monitor and printer. If you plug those grouped items into the same surge protector and then plug that surge protector into a timer, you can control when those devices use energy. Simply set the timer to shut off when you're sleeping or at work!

To understand more ways to improve your home's energy efficiency, contact Piedmont Electric at 800.222.3107 or [info@pemc.coop](mailto:info@pemc.coop) to request a free home energy audit.

*August is a*  
**PEAK MONTH**  
Sign up for Beat the Peak and get alerts encouraging you to save energy during peak times which saves money for you and your co-op!



Visit [connections.coop/pemc](http://connections.coop/pemc) for discount details and a complete list of participating local businesses, national businesses, dentists, chiropractors, vision care centers and pharmacies.

## CO-OP CONNECTIONS® CARD DISCOUNTS

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Visit [connections.coop/pemc](http://connections.coop/pemc) to print a new one or call our office at **800.222.3107** for a replacement.

## PIEDMONT ELECTRIC CONNECTION

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### OFFICE HOURS

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Piedmont Electric is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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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.