



FEATURE ARTICLE

6 SPRING ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIPS

The temperatures are beginning to rise and most of the US is thawing out from a bitter, cold winter. With the seasons changing and spring finally arriving, we've compiled a list of tips and tricks to not only improve your home's energy efficiency, but also help keep your energy bill low:

1. Maintain your air conditioner

By performing routine maintenance, like replacing or cleaning air filters, you can lower your energy usage by almost 15 percent. Also, have a professional examine your air conditioner each year to keep your unit in good shape. A well-maintained unit will reduce the amount of energy required to keep your home at a comfortable temperature.

2. Install energy efficient window treatments

Window treatments such as blinds or shades provide protection from sunlight that causes heat to build up in your home. These easy-to-install treatments allow you to reduce the need to run your air conditioner and lower your energy use.

3. Check for air leaks

Your older windows are likely not energy efficient. Sealing gaps by applying caulk to the joints in a window frame and between the frame and the wall is a low-cost and effective energy-efficient solution.

4. Make use of ceiling fans

Keep your home cool and comfortable

this spring by using your ceiling fan. This easy change will allow you to turn up your thermostat almost four degrees which makes your air conditioner work less and saves you money while you remain cool. Remember to turn off ceiling fans when leaving the room.

5. Cook outside

Use warm days to cook outside on the grill instead of the stove to keep heat out of your home and take the load off your air conditioner.

6. Request a free home energy audit

To schedule a free home energy analysis conducted by one of our energy specialists, call 800.222.3107. Our specialists will make suggestions for home comfort improvements and provide information on our rebates, loans and time-of-day rates.

To learn more energy-efficient tips, flip to page 28 to read our buyers guide on energy-efficient products and visit pemc.coop/energy-efficiency to access our archive of articles, written to provide you with the knowledge to make your home more energy efficient.

IMPORTANT DATES

MAR 11

Daylight saving time begins

Set your clocks forward one hour.

MAR 30

Good Friday

Piedmont Electric's offices will be closed.

MAR 31

Basketball Camp Applications and College Scholarship Applications due

Visit pemc.coop to apply.

APR 27

Annual Meeting of the Members

Yearly business meeting of Piedmont Electric.

SPRING PLANTING GUIDE

Planting the right tree in the right place.

PAGE 26

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR STUDENTS

Learn about our scholarships for graduating seniors and middle school basketball players.

PAGE 27

YOUR BUYERS GUIDE FOR ENERGY-EFFICIENT PRODUCTS

Get advice on buying energy-efficient products for your home.

PAGE 28

MARCH RIGHT-OF-WAY MAINTENANCE

PERSON COUNTY ROADS:

Hwy 57
Morton Pulliam Road
Kelly Brewer Road
Zion Level Church Road
Solomon Lea Road
City Lake Road





Q&A ON SPRING PLANTING

Mike Johnson
Right-of-Way Supervisor
at Piedmont Electric

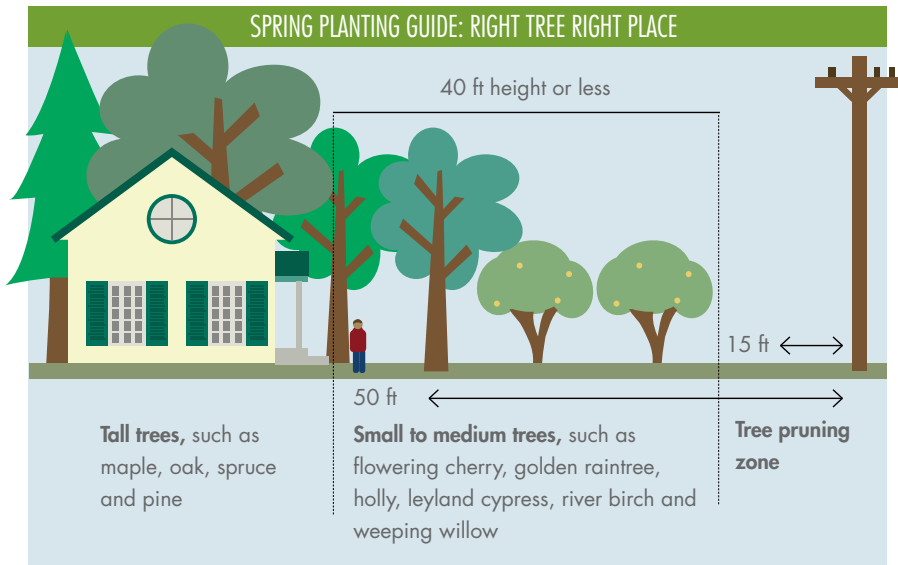
Piedmont Electric sits down with Mike Johnson, Right-of-Way Supervisor to learn about the dos and don'ts of planting this spring.

Planting season is right around the corner! While trees and shrubs make our yards and neighborhoods beautiful, they can also cause right-of-way issues and safety problems for you and your co-op.

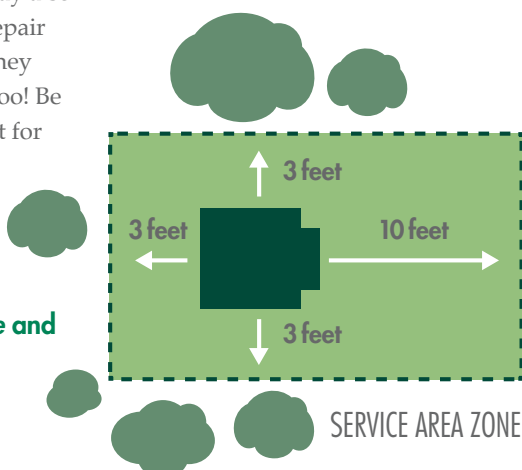
An important part of my job is to maintain a clear right-of-way, which helps reduce outages and blinks by keeping vegetation away from power lines. A clear right-of-way also provides our crews access to repair any issues or outages should they occur, but we need your help too! Be sure to plan ahead and account for hazards before planting near overhead and underground power lines.

Remember these three things when choosing where and what to plant before you start!

1. Trees and shrubs can grow into overhead power lines
Choose the right tree for the right place. If the wrong species is planted, this could result in the tree growing into power lines or becoming too tall and falling onto power lines.



Refer to the image above for help. If you are still not sure, call Piedmont Electric at 800.222.3107 to discuss.



2. Root growth can affect underground power lines
Do you have a pad-mount transformer in your yard? That green metal box is a vital part of your

electric service and there are high-voltage wires underground leading to the box!

Before planting, follow the instructions on your transformer box for shrub distance specifications and always call 811 before you dig to avoid a potentially serious injury.

3. Landscaping can help your home be more energy efficient

North Carolina summers can be hot! Trees and shrubs shade your home, patios, driveways and can even shade your air conditioner to help keep it cooler and running more efficiently. Even shading the area around your home can help reduce radiation and cool the air before it reaches your home's walls and windows.



Visit 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

New Hope Market

10% off grill, market and garden items over \$25

**NC Hwy 86
Chapel Hill, NC**



Can't find your Co-op Connections® Card?

Visit connections.coop/pemc to print a new one or call our office at **800.222.3107** for a replacement.



Calling all
graduating
seniors!

Every year, Piedmont Electric awards scholarships to high school seniors who are planning to continue their education at a college, university, community college or technical school.

To apply, simply complete the online form at pemc.coop/college and include the following items:

- Your most recent academic transcript
- One letter of reference from a teacher, school counselor, employer, youth leader or pastor
- A short 45-60 second personal statement video about yourself

All applications must be submitted no later than 11:59 p.m. on March 31, 2018.

If you have questions, contact Rachael or Abigail by emailing community@pemc.coop or calling 800.222.3107.

Calling all
middle school
students!

Do you have a rising sixth, seventh or eighth grader who loves to play basketball? Don't let them miss out on the opportunity to practice in real college facilities and spend time on campus!

Middle school boys can apply to the Roy Williams Carolina Basketball Camp at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, being held June 16-20.

Middle school girls can apply to the Wolfpack Women's basketball camp at NC State University in Raleigh, being held June 10-13.

Applications for both basketball camp scholarships must be submitted no later than 11:59 p.m. on March 31. For more information, visit pemc.coop/basketball.





YOUR BUYERS GUIDE FOR ENERGY-EFFICIENT PRODUCTS

One way to help lower your monthly energy bill is to use energy-efficient products in your home. However, it can be overwhelming to decide which items will make the largest impact.

To choose the right products, it's important to keep in mind how you use energy in your home as well as your overall energy-saving goals. Here are a few ideas to get you started:

Heating and Cooling

Smart thermostats, such as the Nest or Ecobee, will learn your heating and cooling behavior over time and will automatically make adjustments based on your preferences.

Programmable thermostats allow you to set the temperature based on your schedule. For example, your thermostat could raise your home's temperature while you're away at work during the day and automatically lower the temperature before you arrive home.

Lighting

Making the switch to LED light bulbs is one of the easiest ways to increase efficiency in your home. Upgrading your bulbs has become less expensive over the last few years and we can help make it even more affordable. We offer a \$1 rebate per LED bulb purchased—up to \$15 per year per member.

Appliances and Electronics

When shopping for new appliances and electronics, you should look for ENERGY STAR® certified products. The blue ENERGY STAR label on a product indicates it has met strict energy efficiency criteria established by the Environmental Protection Agency.

Investing in an ENERGY STAR certified dishwasher could save you as much as \$35 each year. Similarly, ENERGY STAR certified TVs are on average 25 percent more efficient than traditional models.

For help on deciding which products are right for your home and information about our time-of-day rates, rebates and loans, request a free home energy audit conducted by one of our energy specialists by calling 800.222.3107.

To learn more about how upgrading the products in your home can affect your bill, visit pemc.coop/tools to use our energy efficiency calculators.

PIEDMONT ELECTRIC CONNECTION

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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.