



CONNECTION

PIEDMONT ELECTRIC MEMBERSHIP CORPORATION MEMBER NEWSLETTER | JANUARY 2020



A resolution that's easy to keep

With the start of a new year, many of us are getting back to the gym, eating more vegetables and saving more money. Unfortunately, even though we have the best intentions, statistically most resolutions fail by February.

Let Piedmont Electric help you keep your money-saving resolution this year by joining our energy-saving programs!

Time-of-day rate

Our time-of-day rate program makes it easy to save money because you don't necessarily use less energy, you just need to shift your energy use to different times of the day. With a time-of-day rate, you pay a lower rate for the energy you use during off-peak hours which include holidays, weekends and most weekday hours.

In the winter, you'll want to avoid energy use during on-peak hours from 6-10 am, while in the summer, you'll avoid using energy from 1-6 pm.

Sign up for a time-of-day rate by visiting pemc.coop/timeofday.

Water heater load management

When you sign up for our water heater load management program we'll install a switch on your water heater tank to limit the energy used to heat your water during peak hours on the weekdays.

When we need to control on peak days, we limit the control of the water heater to no more than 4 hours on cold winter mornings and 6 hours on hot summer afternoons (except for peak load emergencies).

Members receive a \$1/month credit on their bill for joining the program. And best of all, your water heater tank keeps a reserve of hot water, so most participants don't even notice when we control the tank. Learn more at: pemc.coop/load-management.

Smart thermostat savings program

Members who sign up for our smart thermostat savings program with their Nest or Ecobee smart thermostat will receive a \$50 rebate plus monthly bill credits in the summer. Learn more about the benefits of this program by visiting pemc.coop/thermostat.

For even more ways to save, visit pemc.coop/save-energy-money.

IMPORTANT DATES

January 20

Martin Luther King Jr. Day

March 31

Basketball camp applications due

College scholarship applications due

22 [Your guide to preparing for winter storms](#)

24 [You asked and we listened](#)

January right-of-way maintenance

ALAMANCE/ORANGE/
GRANVILLE COUNTY

Ben Wilson Road
Hebron Church Road
Old Hillsborough Road
Mebane Oaks Road
Cook Street
Calloway Drive
Cornwall Road
Dalton Mill Road
Robert Morgan Road



YOUR GUIDE TO PREPARING FOR **winter storms**

While we monitor the weather and inform you about expected impacts, sometimes storms move quickly and without much warning.

Use this guide to help you prepare for winter storms before they hit and keep it as a reference for the next time snow and ice are in the forecast.

Prepare your house



Take the following steps to help your home better withstand cold weather:

- Use caulk to seal gaps around your doors and windows to keep cold air from entering your home.
- If you have a wood-burning fireplace, stock up on dry firewood to keep you warm.
- Similarly, if you have a generator, make sure you have enough fuel to keep it in operation if needed and refresh yourself on the instructions for safe use.
- When snow and ice are in the forecast, put down sand on your outdoor walkways before the winter weather arrives to help prevent dangerous falls.

Reminder: Only use the emergency heat option on your thermostat if it is truly an emergency, as this setting is much more expensive to run.

Stay informed

As your cooperative, part of our job is to keep you updated on outages. During winter storms, you can get the latest information from us in these ways:

- **Text outage alerts**
Take the time right now to sign up for outage notifications by **texting "pemc" to 800.222.3107**. Then text "#out" to report an outage and "#update" for an update on the progress of your outage.
- **Social Media**
Follow our Facebook and Twitter profiles for updates:
  **PiedmontEMC**
- **Website**
Visit our website at **pemc.coop** where the latest updates will be posted.
- **Online outage map**
Our map shows all the affected areas throughout our service territory and is updated in real time. You can bookmark **<http://outageviewer.pemc.org:88/>** on your phone's web browser so you'll always have the information when you need it most.

Make an emergency supply kit

Take time now to prepare an emergency supply kit that can be accessed quickly. We recommend including the following items:

- Three-day supply of nonperishable food
- Water: one gallon per person, per day
- Important prescription medicines
- Personal hygiene items
- Non-electric can opener
- Dry chemical fire extinguisher
- Battery-powered radio
- First aid kit
- Blankets
- Matches
- Flashlight
- Extra batteries
- Shovel and sand

Reminder: Don't forget to restock the supplies when you use them.

How does power get restored after a winter storm?

Did you know that it's more difficult to restore power during a winter storm than it is in the summer? That's because snow and ice on branches and power lines often freeze, melt and then refreeze which can cause additional issues. Plus, snow and ice can make it difficult for linemen to navigate to areas that need to be serviced.

It's a tough job, but our linemen are well-equipped to get it done! Here's how they do it:

- They first work with our dispatch center to locate the problem causing the outage. When members report their outages, it helps our dispatch center narrow in on the exact location of the issue. Once our linemen are on the scene, they are ready to repair any issue from removing trees on the lines to replacing entire poles.
- We always work to restore power to the most members in the shortest amount of time. Typically, this means that we will work on solving problems at affected substations before moving on to issues on our distribution lines which carry electricity from the substation to our members.

We appreciate your patience during outages as our staff works hard to bring power back to your homes.

How to Report an Outage

- **Phone:** Call us at 800.222.3107
- **Online:** Login to SmartHub and select "Report An Outage"
- **Text outage alerts:** Opt in to the program by texting "pemc" to 800.222.3107. Then text "#out" to report an outage.

You asked and we listened.

As a member of Piedmont Electric, you are more than a customer, you're a member! That means you have a say in how we operate. Every year, we have an annual member advisory forum to get your feedback in addition to random monthly member surveys.

We implement changes based on those results, so thank you for taking the time to share your opinions! Here are a few of the changes we've made over the past year based on your feedback:



Annual Meeting

Members wanted an easier way to cast their vote for the board of directors. So, in 2019 we offered online and mail-in voting for the first time.

We are also scaling back our annual meeting to just a business meeting in 2020 so that we can still provide you with all the information you need about your cooperative at a fraction of the expense.

Text outage alerts

Smartphones have made certain aspects of life more convenient than ever and you told us you'd like to be able to report and monitor outages from your phone as well.

As a result, we rolled out our text outage alert system which allows you to report outages and receive updates all conveniently via text. If you haven't joined yet, text "pemc" to 800.222.3107 to sign up for this program.

SmartHub App

Our SmartHub app has been around for a while, but in 2019, a new version was released making it easier to use and navigate.

With this new update, you can now view important notifications to stay up to date on the latest news from your cooperative.

And, just like always, it allows you to monitor your daily energy use, pay your bill and manage your account while you're on the go.

Make your voice heard

Those are some of the biggest changes we made in 2019, but your feedback has also helped us make other business operation changes like right-of-way notifications, planned work notices and more.

If you receive an email or phone call asking you to take part in a survey about our cooperative, we hope you will.

It helps us better serve you and your feedback can influence some of the changes we make in 2020 and beyond!

Slow or expensive internet service?
Let us know you are interested in a better internet solution at [Join.BuildPiedmont.com](https://www.join.buildpiedmont.com).
No commitment necessary!

PIEDMONT ELECTRIC CONNECTION

Published monthly for the members of Piedmont Electric Membership Corporation Piedmont Electric is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Pay account and access account information by phone 24-hours-a-day by calling 800.222.3107

Voice instructions will direct you through the system.

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IF YOUR POWER GOES OUT, CALL US OR TEXT US AT 800.222.3107

Opt in for text alerts by texting "pemc" to 800.222.3107. Once you've opted in, report an outage by texting "#out" to 800.222.3107.

Our automated outage reporting system uses your phone number to determine your service location. Update the number connected to your account by completing the form that comes with your monthly bill or by calling 800.222.3107.

Please note that it may take up to 24 hours for our system to recognize new cell phone numbers in the text outage alert program.