



# CONNECTION

PIEDMONT ELECTRIC MEMBERSHIP CORPORATION MEMBER NEWSLETTER | JUNE 2020



## New meters being tested this summer

Piedmont Electric will be installing and testing new meters this summer for a portion of members. Then, if everything goes as planned, we will roll out the new meters to all members.

These new meters will provide more information to members and the cooperative which will enable more informed energy decisions.

This information will provide you with details about your energy use throughout the day so you can determine how changes in your home or energy efficiency projects impact your power bill. It will also help provide information on whether you might benefit from one of our different rate options like our time-of-day rate.

For the cooperative, this information will provide insights into the energy use across our system, improve the speed with which we can identify issues on our grid, help us spot outages before members can report them and give us better control of our equipment in the field.

This means we will be strengthening our already strong reliability, decreasing the length of power outages and saving you money by allowing us to operate our system more efficiently.

Your cooperative operates as a not-for-profit utility and as such we are always concerned with the money we spend as we know it ultimately comes from our members. We do not take the cost of replacing these meters lightly.

This project was moved to a higher priority when our meter manufacturer informed us that they will be ending the support of our current meters and will soon stop

providing replacement meters.

Despite this pressure, our staff has conducted a thorough review of more than a dozen metering systems to determine which one will be the best fit for our system.

Our new meters will transmit information using secure radio frequencies. The radio frequencies are like those in your car's radio but can only be received and used by Piedmont Electric's system.

Members who would prefer an analog meter be used can choose to do so. These members will be assessed a monthly meter reading fee to cover the extra cost of sending personnel out to read a meter each month.

Piedmont Electric will be working with contractors to supplement the work of our staff to install the new meters across our system. These contractors will be in marked vehicles and will not need any information from you.

You will not need to be home or do anything to prepare so long as we have access to your meter.

However there will be a brief power outage of several minutes while the new meter is installed. Members who are at home during the day will be able to make an appointment to help minimize disruption at their home.

### IMPORTANT DATES

**June 21 - 27**

**National Lightning Safety Awareness Week**

**June 21**

**Father's Day**

**July 4**

**Independence Day**

Piedmont Electric offices will be closed on July 3 and employees will be on call.

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### June right-of-way maintenance

#### PERSON COUNTY

Olive Branch Road  
Bowmantown Road  
Dirgie Mine Road  
Bowen Road  
Helena Moriah Road  
Robert Gentry Road  
Dink Ashley Road



Are you looking for a better internet solution?

Let your voice be heard at **Join.BuildPiedmont.com** today!



### NEED ASSISTANCE?

Feel free to email us at **info@pemc.coop** or call us at **800.222.3107**.

# Try our time-of-day rate for a year, risk free

We know that many of our members are spending more time at home because of the COVID-19 outbreak. While more time at home does typically mean more energy use, we want to assure you that there are still ways to save energy and control your electric bill.

Switching to a time-of-day rate could help members save as the rate rewards members for shifting their energy use to off-peak times.

On a time-of-day rate, members are charged a much lower rate during off-peak hours than on-peak hours.

During the warm months, on-peak hours are 1-6 p.m. each weekday while all other hours including weekends and holidays are considered off-peak hours. Here are a couple of suggestions for how to maximize your energy savings on a time-of-day rate.

- 🕒 **Precool your home. Program your thermostat at a temperature 2-3 degrees below your normal temperature from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. By doing this you are cooling your home at the lower rate. Then, at 1 p.m. have the thermostat set to 2-3 degrees above your normal household temperature. This will help you stay cool while also saving.**
- 🕒 **Reduce hot water use or turn off your electric water heater during on-peak hours as the water in the unit will stay hot for several hours even while off.**
- 🕒 **Avoid using large appliances such as dishwashers, ovens, washing machines and dryers during on-peak hours.**
- 🕒 **Turn off and unplug unused appliances and electronics.**

Try this rate for a year and if you don't save compared to our regular rate, we'll refund you the difference, no questions asked. As your local cooperative we are here to help you manage your energy use. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to us for guidance at [info@pemc.coop](mailto:info@pemc.coop) or **800.222.3107**.







## SmartHub: The most versatile tool in your energy-saving toolbox

We do our best to make sure you're equipped with programs and knowledge about how to use energy efficiently and save money while doing it.

By far, the most powerful tool available to you is our SmartHub application! If you're not using it regularly, you're missing out on a valuable opportunity to make your life a little bit easier.

### You can use SmartHub to:

- Receive daily energy use alerts so you're always in the know and never surprised.
- Set up automatic online bill payments.
- Submit a service request.
- Report an outage.
- Get alerts about unusual spikes in your energy use, which could signal a problem with equipment at your home.
- Ask one of our energy experts a question.
- And more!

You can access SmartHub from your computer at [pemc.smarthub.coop](https://pemc.smarthub.coop) or through the SmartHub app on your smartphone or tablet.

# How to prep for summer storm season

The third week in June is National Lightning Safety Awareness Week, which coincides with the height of summer storm season here in North Carolina.

The best thing you can do to protect yourself and your family from the dangers of summer storms is to prepare. Together, we can get through summer storm season safely!

## WHAT TO DO BEFORE STORMS HIT

### Create an emergency kit.

It should include bottled water, non-perishable foods, first aid supplies, flashlights, batteries and any other items you might need if you were to be without power for several days. Keep it in a place that's easy to access and remember to replenish it if you ever use anything from it.

### Sign up for text outage notifications.

When you sign up for our text outage alert program, you can report outages directly from your phone. You'll also receive restoration updates as they become available. Sign up by texting "pemc" to **800.222.3107**.

### Make sure Piedmont Electric has your updated contact information.

If we don't have the correct phone number or email address for you, we won't be able to communicate with you to share important information during storms. Take a few moments to check your SmartHub account or call **800.222.3107** to verify that the information we have is correct so you can stay in the loop.

## WHAT TO DO DURING A SUMMER STORM

### Stay inside.

If possible, stay indoors for the duration of a summer storm. If you're outside when the storm starts and you cannot get indoors, try to find a safe shelter until the storm passes.

### Report outages.

If you lose power during a storm and you've joined our text outage notification program, you can quickly report the outage by texting "out" to **800.222.3107**. You can also report an outage through SmartHub or by calling us at **800.222.3107**.

## WHAT TO DO AFTER A SUMMER STORM

### Watch out for flooded areas.

Stay away from flooded areas and never drive through a flooded roadway as submerged electrical cords could energize the water and put you in danger.

### Avoid downed powerlines.

Do not go near downed power lines or anything they might be touching. Downed lines could still be energized and dangerous. If you see a downed power line, call us at **800.222.3107**.



Protect your valuable electronic equipment from damaging power surges with our Strike Guard program.

Visit [pemc.coop/strikeguard](http://pemc.coop/strikeguard) to learn more and sign up.

## 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 or "#status" for an update on your outage.

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.