

OCTOBER 2020

# Carolina country

**Strong today,  
stronger tomorrow,  
strongest together**



**October 7<sup>th</sup>**

Face masks and hand sanitizers for members (limited quantities)

**INSIDE COVER**

The 7 cooperative principles that will guide us into the future.

**INSIDE BACK COVER**

Here for our community.

**BACK COVER**

Our co-op team members are more than employees; they're your neighbors.



PERIODICAL

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

# 7 COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLES

Since our cooperative was founded in 1938, we've put our members first by following a set of core values and principles. They've guided us through changing and challenging times and we know they will usher us into a stronger and brighter future for our co-op.

-  **1** ***Voluntary and Open Membership*** Cooperatives are open to everyone who is able to use its services. Anyone who moves into Piedmont Electric's service area is allowed membership without discrimination.
-  **2** ***Democratic Member Control*** Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members. Piedmont Electric members vote for directors from our membership, ensuring that our board is made up of members just like you who live in and understand our community.
-  **3** ***Members' Economic Participation*** As a member-owned organization, any revenue exceeding expenses, called margins, are shared back with those we serve in the form of capital credits. Credits are paid back to members based on their electricity purchases from the cooperative. Since 1975, Piedmont Electric has returned more than \$27 million in margins to our members.
-  **4** ***Autonomy and Independence*** A cooperative is a self-governing organization controlled by its members. This allows us to offer services, programs and policies that fit our members' specific wants and needs.
-  **5** ***Education Training and Information*** Cooperatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives and employees so they can effectively contribute to the development of the cooperative. Piedmont Electric provides education about energy efficiency, safety and more through our newsletters, social media and emails.
-  **6** ***Cooperation Among Cooperatives*** We're stronger together. We have mutual-aid agreements with other electric cooperatives so that when Piedmont Electric needs extra hands after a major outage, neighboring co-ops assist us. Likewise, we'll be there to lend a helping hand to other co-ops when they are in need.
-  **7** ***Concern for Community*** Empowering our current and future members ensures a brighter and stronger future for all of us. We show our commitment to our communities by supporting a wide range of youth programs and community programs through Piedmont Electric's Helping Hand Foundation.

# YOUR CO-OP, YOUR COMMUNITY

As we celebrate National Co-op Month, we're reminded of what's at the core of our cooperative: our members.

Investing in our communities and our members is one of our cooperative principles and a part of who we are. Throughout 2020, we've given back to the community in the following ways:



HELPING  
HAND  
FOUNDATION

Supported those in need during the COVID-19 pandemic through our Helping Hand Foundation. Thanks to generous members who participate in this voluntary program, we gave **\$70,000** in support to those going through a difficult time.



Returned **\$1.4 million** in capital credits to current and past members since 2019.



Invested in our co-op's youth through **\$23,000** in college scholarships for high school seniors planning to continue their education at a college, university, community college or technical school.



Awarded **more than \$49,000** to local educators for innovative class projects to support learning efforts through our Bright Ideas education grants.



Secured more than **\$650,000** in USDA REDLG funding for zero-interest loans to local fire departments.

This year has been a uniquely difficult one. In response to the COVID-19 health crisis, we put an extra focus on giving back to our community to help out during this challenging time. In doing so, we:

**\$70K**

Provided more than **\$70,000** in utility assistance thanks to the development of our Helping Hand Foundation's COVID-19 Relief Fund.

Applied more than **\$150,000** in deposits to past due balances for our members to help ease the economic burden of the ongoing health crisis.

**\$150K**

**12-MONTH**

Established long-term payment arrangements, which gives members a **12-month** grace period to pay back past due balances on energy used before August 2020 without fear of disconnection.

Starting October 7, we will be handing out safety bags which include reusable face masks and hand sanitizer in lieu of our annual community day. The bags will be available at each office throughout the month while supplies last. You can pick them up during business hours using our contact-less drive through. Limit one bag per member.

If you'd like to contribute to our COVID-19 Relief Fund to help support those in our community, you can do so at [penc.coop/donate](https://penc.coop/donate).

# YOUR CO-OP EMPLOYEES, YOUR NEIGHBORS

The people who go to work every day to serve you as a member of our cooperative are more than just employees; they're also your neighbors. Hear from the heart of your co-op about why they love being a part of Piedmont Electric.



I have been so blessed to be a part of Piedmont Electric, especially being able to work in the Caswell County office. The relationships that you form with members become more than a "provider/member" relationship, they become lasting friendships.

**- Pam Lewis, Alamance County**



I love working at the co-op because I get to help people in the community by fixing issues they have with their electricity. As a lineman, I feel appreciated by our members as they are always saying that we do a good job at keeping the lights on and responding quickly to outages at Piedmont Electric.

**- Dale Tuck, Granville County**



The co-op is close to my heart because I've developed relationships with so many members and it's awesome to know that I can help them. I also love the great work environment at Piedmont Electric.

**- Jessica King, Orange County**



I like being a part of the co-op because I think we are truly member focused and our actions here are driven by making our members' lives better and giving back to the communities we serve. I also love working for the coop because it has created a second family for me. We truly care about each other and our members. I am extremely proud of what I do and how we do it.

**- Dawn Reinwald, Orange County**



I love working for a company that is concerned about its members. I appreciate the way the co-op reached out to members and assured them that we care and will work with them during the COVID-19 crisis. As a member service representative, I enjoy helping people and being there to listen.

**- Julia Bradsher, Person County**



[www.pemc.coop](http://www.pemc.coop)

800.222.3107