



# Connection

PIEDMONT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE MEMBER NEWSLETTER | MARCH 2024



## Take Control of Your Energy Use

If you want to save money on your electricity bill, knowledge is power. When you have a better understanding of how you use energy and which areas of your home are inefficient, you can use that information to make decisions that have the most impact on your bill.

Here are a few things you can do to get the information you need to take better control of your energy use and lower your bills this year.

### Track Your Energy Use in SmartHub

Log in to SmartHub or the SmartHub app to set up daily usage alerts to make it easier to see how much energy your household uses. This daily email will give you important energy insights so you can make adjustments throughout the month to help you save.

To set up the alerts:

1. Log in to SmartHub
2. Select “Notifications”
3. Select “Manage Contacts” and enter your email address
4. Next, select “Notifications” and then “Manage Notifications”
5. Under “Reports” select “Usage Emails” to start receiving daily alerts

### See How Much It Costs to Use Electricity in Your Home

Are you curious to see how much of your electricity costs go towards lighting, kitchen appliances and more? You can use our online energy calculators to input

data about your appliances, water heater, television, etc. to see how much it costs to use them throughout the year.

This data can help you identify the biggest energy consumers in your home, so you can make changes that will have the biggest impact on your energy use. You can use our calculators by visiting [pemc.coop/energy-calculators](https://pemc.coop/energy-calculators).

### Schedule a Free In-Home Energy Analysis

To get even more insight into how you can improve your home’s energy efficiency, enlist the help of a professional. All of our members have the option to set up a free in-home energy analysis, which is performed by an energy specialist.

They’ll look around your home and make suggestions for improvements so it’s easier for you to save money on your electricity bill. To schedule your free energy analysis, please visit [pemc.coop/home-energy-advisor](https://pemc.coop/home-energy-advisor).

If you have questions about your energy use, you can email us at [info@pemc.coop](mailto:info@pemc.coop), call us at **800.222.3107** or use the chat feature on our website at [pemc.coop](https://pemc.coop).

#### IMPORTANT DATES

### March 29

#### Good Friday

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

### March 31

#### Basketball Camp Applications Due

#### College Scholarship Applications Due

### April 19

#### Annual Meeting

- 20 [Rate Changes Coming May 1](#)
- 21 [Tips To Make Your Dollar Go Further](#)
- 22 [Try Our Time-of-Day Rate Risk-Free for a Year!](#)



Mark your calendars for our annual meeting livestream!

Turn to page 22 for the details.

## Rate Changes Coming May 1

Last year, Piedmont Electric Cooperative conducted a third-party study to determine if the rates we charge ensure we can continue to provide you with the exceptional service and reliability you have come to expect from your local co-op.

We have discussed this study, known as a cost-of-service study, in several previous issues of our newsletter. The study has concluded, and staff and the board of directors are in the process of finalizing the details of what changes will be necessary. The details will be shared in future newsletters once the exact changes are finalized. Changes will take effect with your May 2024 bill.

### A couple of key points we can share with you now.

- While we continuously strive to keep rates low, inflation and increases in the cost of electricity generation necessitate an increase to our rates beginning May 1.
- In September 2023, the wholesale power cost adjustment (WPCA) line on members' bills became the wholesale power and TIER adjustment (WPTA). While the WPTA line will remain on bills, it will significantly decrease as the rate increases ultimately resulting in little net change to the bottom line for what members have seen on their bills since September.
- Through strong financial management, Piedmont Electric has not had a general rate increase since 2014. We have been able to wait longer to increase rates than other North Carolina power companies.
- For members who are concerned about their bill, Piedmont Electric provides programs to help members save energy and money and we can connect you with payment resources. We are here to serve our members and we encourage anyone struggling to pay their bill to reach out to us so that we may assist you.

While we know no one likes to pay more for something, this rate change is necessary to be able to continue to maintain our electric system. The increase enables us to pay for the necessary maintenance to our system. Without this maintenance, outages would become more frequent and longer in duration.

As your local co-op, we promise to continue to work to keep costs down and minimize the impact of increases on our members. If you or someone you know is interested in programs to save energy and money or needs assistance with paying a bill, please contact us at **800.222.3107** or **info@pemc.coop** so we can work towards a solution that works for you.



# Tips to Make Your Dollar Go Further

The easiest way to stretch your dollar is to use energy in your home more efficiently. Not sure how to get started? These tips will help you make the most of the money you spend on electricity each month.

## Take Advantage of Money-Saving Programs

Our programs are designed to help you save money year-round! You might find that some of them fit your lifestyle better than others, or you can join them all to maximize your savings.

- **Time-of-day rate:** Pay a lower rate for the energy you use on weekends, most holidays, and 19-20 hours every weekday. Simply shift your energy use away from on-peak times to notice the difference on your bill.
- **Smart thermostat savings program:** Nest smart thermostat owners can join this program to save on cooling costs on very hot summer days. In addition to saving on air conditioning costs, you'll receive a rebate for joining and a bill credit during the summer months.
- **Load management:** Sign up for this program and we can cycle your air conditioner and/or electric water heater off to reduce usage during high-peak times. By participating, you can receive bill credits based on the specifics of the load management program you choose.

Learn how to join these money-saving programs at [pemc.coop/smart-energy](https://pemc.coop/smart-energy).

## Pay Attention to Peak Times and Shift Energy Use Accordingly

Part of our wholesale power cost is determined by how much energy our members use during peak times. When we all work together to reduce usage during peak times, we can save more money on our electricity bills and this savings gets passed on to our members.

You can stay informed about peak times by joining our Beat the Peak program. When you do, you'll receive text or email alerts about expected peak periods so you can adjust your energy use. Learn how to sign up by visiting [pemc.coop/beat-the-peak](https://pemc.coop/beat-the-peak).



### Need Help?

We're here for you! Call us at **800.222.3107**, email [info@pemc.coop](mailto:info@pemc.coop) or chat with us on our website at [pemc.coop](https://pemc.coop). Our knowledgeable member service reps are waiting to answer your questions or help you sign up for one of our energy-saving programs.

## Make Simple Energy-Saving Updates Around Your Home

When your home isn't energy efficient, you have to use more energy to stay comfortable. Making small updates like changing your air filters monthly or sealing cracks around your windows and doors can help you reduce energy use while staying comfortable. For more energy-saving tips, visit [pemc.coop/energy-saving-tips](https://pemc.coop/energy-saving-tips).

**BEAT THE PEAK**



## Try Our Time-of-Day Rate Risk-Free for a Year!

If you've thought about signing up for our time-of-day rate in the past but you haven't taken the jump, why not give it a try for a year? Joining our time-of-day program is risk-free, so there's nothing to lose.

If you sign up for this rate for a year and you don't save compared to our regular rate, we'll refund you the difference, no questions asked. The average member saved more than \$20 per month by switching to this rate last year; this year, that could be you!

When you're ready to try our time-of-day rate for yourself, please visit [pemc.coop/special-rates](https://pemc.coop/special-rates) to sign up online or call **800.222.3107** to speak to one of our friendly member service representatives.



## Save the Date for Our 2024 Annual Meeting Livestream

Our annual meeting is just around the corner which means you'll have a chance to vote in our annual board of directors election.

### Let Your Voice Be Heard

In March, you'll receive an email with instructions on how to cast your vote in this year's board of directors election. The instructions will also be in the April issue of Carolina Country.

We offer online and mail-in voting options so it's easy for you to have a say in the leadership of the co-op from the comfort of your own home.

### Tune In to Our Virtual Annual Meeting

We will be live-streaming our annual meeting on Facebook on **Friday, April 19, at 10 a.m.** You can watch it live or on your own time after the event either on our Facebook page or website. Thank you in advance for being an active member of our co-op!



### PIEDMONT ELECTRIC CONNECTION

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

**Hillsborough and Roxboro Drive-Thru Hours:**  
Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday  
8 a.m.-5 p.m.

**Caswell Drive-Thru Hours:**  
Wednesday 8 a.m.-5 p.m.  
Offices are closed except for scheduled appointments.  
Available by phone Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Report outages, make payments and access account information by phone 24-hours-a-day by calling 800.222.3107.  
You can also pay your bill online at [pemc.smarthub.coop](https://pemc.smarthub.coop).

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Stephen B. Hamlin  
President & General Manager

#### DIRECTORS

Randy Kinley, Chair  
Steven P. Bailey, Vice Chair  
David Poythress, Secretary  
Richal Vanhook, Treasurer  
Darren Chalk, Stephen C. Long,  
V.Kay Scurlock-Ferguson,  
Jimmy Thomas & Cyrus Vernon

#### IF YOUR POWER GOES OUT, CALL OR TEXT 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 phone number connected to your account online through SmartHub, by completing the form on your monthly bill or by calling 800.222.3107.

Use the SmartHub app to report an outage or online at [pemc.smarthub.coop/#reportanissue](https://pemc.smarthub.coop/#reportanissue) with your SmartHub login.

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.