



Connection

PIEDMONT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE MEMBER NEWSLETTER | SEPTEMBER 2024



Back to School Energy Savings

As the new school year begins, members across our cooperative are bustling with excitement and preparing for a new routine. It's also the perfect time to consider making smart changes to your energy habits to lower your bill.

Here are a few A+ things you can do to help lower your energy bill this school year and beyond!

Sign Up to Save

Joining our smart energy programs makes it easier to save money on your electricity costs. Options like our time-of-day rates, load management and smart thermostat savings program are designed to help you optimize energy use and reduce costs while staying comfortable in your home. You can also join Beat the Peak to receive convenient reminders about conserving energy during peak times.

To learn more about each of these programs and how to sign up, please visit pemc.coop/smart-energy.

Upgrade to ENERGY STAR® Appliances

If your appliances are 15-20 years old, consider upgrading to ENERGY STAR appliances, which meet strict energy efficiency guidelines. Whether you choose a new refrigerator or washing machine, these appliances use less energy than other models, helping you save money with every use.

Beyond that, many ENERGY STAR appliances come with rebates or tax credits, helping to extend the savings. Visit energy.gov to learn more about available incentives.

Make Changes Around Your Home

Making small energy-efficient changes around your home can lead to significant savings on your energy bill. Here are some things to do this fall:

- **Seal gaps:** Use caulk or weatherstripping to seal gaps around doors and windows to prevent drafts.
- **Use self-timer outlets:** Install self-timer outlets to turn off electronics automatically when not in use.
- **Opt for LED lighting:** Replace incandescent light bulbs with energy-efficient LED lights.
- **Cook dinner outside:** Take advantage of these beautiful autumn nights by making dinner outside on the grill instead of using the oven.

Consider taking these energy-saving steps as your homework for this school year; you'll enjoy lower bills before you know it.

IMPORTANT DATES

Sept. 1
College Scholarship Applications Open

Sept. 2
Bright Ideas Final Deadline

Sept. 2
Labor Day
Piedmont Electric offices will be closed and employees will be on call.

Sept. 27 - Oct. 6
National Drive Electric Week

20 **The Future Is Electric!**

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22 **Are You Prepared for Hurricane Season?**



Your co-op will be attending the following community events this month. We hope to see you out and about!

- Hog Day in Hillsborough on Sept. 14
- Bright Leaf Hoedown in Yanceyville on Sept. 28

The Future Is Electric!

With advancements in technology, improved affordability and increasing environmental concerns, more drivers are making the switch to electric vehicles. As your local electric cooperative, we're excited to share the benefits of EVs and how they can seamlessly fit into your lifestyle while contributing to a greener future.



Cost Benefits of EVs

EVs offer several cost benefits compared to traditional vehicles, making them a wallet-friendly choice for many of our members.

- **Lower fuel costs:** Charging an EV is generally cheaper than refueling your car with gas, especially when members charge overnight on our electric vehicle time-of-day rate.
- **Maintenance savings:** Electric vehicles have fewer moving parts than gas-powered cars, so there are fewer components that can wear out over time. Additionally, EVs don't require oil changes, helping you save money in annual maintenance costs.
- **Tax incentives:** Tax credits, rebates and other financial incentives are available for those purchasing EVs, helping to reduce the upfront cost of the vehicle.

Environmental Benefits of EVs

Of course, purchasing an electric vehicle is also good for the planet, which benefits all of us!

- **Lower carbon footprint:** EVs don't produce tailpipe emissions, which helps to reduce the overall greenhouse gas emissions. Even when accounting for the emissions from electricity production, EVs have a smaller carbon footprint compared to gas-powered vehicles.
- **Reduced air pollution:** When more people in your community switch to driving an EV, it can lead to better air quality, which we can all enjoy.
- **Reduction in fossil fuel use:** By reducing the demand for gasoline and diesel, electric vehicles help decrease the extraction, refining and transportation of fossil fuels, which reduces the impact on the environment.
- **Energy independence:** EV owners can charge their vehicles using renewable energy sources, reducing their reliance on fossil fuels and eliminating the fluctuating costs of gas as part of their monthly expenses.

Want to learn more about whether an electric vehicle is right for you? On the next page, explore how Piedmont Electric helps support EV owners and visit pemc.coop/electric-vehicle-faq to get the answers to our most frequently asked EV questions.



Your Co-op Is Your EV Co-Pilot

As your trusted, local cooperative, we're here to help you fully enjoy the benefits of electric vehicles. Consider this your handy guide to owning an EV so you can make the most of this green, energy-efficient choice.



Piedmont Electric EV Rebate

As a member of our cooperative, you can qualify for a \$50 rebate credited to your bill when you notify us that you've bought or leased a plug-in EV. To apply for the rebate, visit pemc.coop/electric-vehicles, fill out the EV rebate form and provide us with a copy of the vehicle registration. Each EV you have can qualify for a separate rebate.

Note: To be eligible for this rebate, the address on the EV registration must match the address receiving service from our co-op.

Save on Charging Costs With Our EV Time-of-Day Rate

Want to experience even more savings by switching to an EV? We provide a special rate for members with an EV tailored to those who charge their vehicles overnight. By charging up during off-peak hours, you can notice significant savings on your energy bill.

You can sign up by visiting pemc.coop/electric-vehicles.

The Co-op Charging Network

If you're concerned about being unable to charge your EV while you're out and about, your co-op has your back. We currently have the following EV charging stations in our service area:

- A fast-charging station in Mebane at Arby's on Mebane Oaks Road
- Two fast-charging stations in Carrboro at Carrboro Plaza on NC Hwy 54
- A Level 2 charging station at our office in Hillsborough

There are also charging stations across cooperative territories in our state, so you can get where you need to go. Visit ncdriveelectric.com to see a map of North Carolina charging sites.

If you have questions as you prepare to get an EV, don't hesitate to call us at 800.222.3107. Our knowledgeable employees are here to be a resource for you.

National Drive Electric Week is Sept. 27 - Oct. 6!

Join us on Tuesday, Oct. 1 from 2-4 p.m. at Carrboro Plaza on Hwy 54 to learn more about electric vehicles.

Are You Prepared for Hurricane Season?



September marks the middle of peak hurricane season in North Carolina, and we want to help you feel prepared should a storm impact our area.

Before a storm, assemble an easy-to-access emergency kit with flashlights, batteries, non-perishable food, water and medications. You should also charge your electronic devices and keep a battery-powered radio handy to stay updated on the latest weather reports.

Unfortunately, during hurricane season, power outages are more common. It's essential to be prepared and know which actions to take when you experience an outage. We recommend bookmarking pemc.coop/outage-center on your phone or computer for easy access during a storm.

From that page you can:

- Report an outage
- View the status of ongoing outages
- Learn more about the steps to restoring power

Follow [@PiedmontEMC](#) on Facebook and Twitter for the latest outage updates or, if you phone number is on file with us, text **"#status"** to **800.222.3107** for the latest on your specific outage.

While we hope that hurricanes won't impact our service area this season, rest assured that your cooperative is always prepared and will work quickly and safely to minimize the impact of outages caused by these storms.

Help Keep Crews Safe: Don't Attach Items to Poles

Did you know that attaching objects to Piedmont Electric Cooperative's utility poles without consent is illegal and hazardous to our line workers?

Unauthorized attachments create significant dangers for line workers. Items like signs, tacks, staples, barbed wire, flags and other attachments can make poles extremely difficult and risky to climb, obstructing essential repairs. Even a single nail can allow moisture to penetrate the wood, accelerating decay and necessitating costly replacements.

Piedmont Electric line crews regularly climb utility poles under harsh conditions. We urge the public to avoid placing any objects on utility poles. Any unauthorized attachments will be removed by our line personnel.

Thank you for helping us maintain a safe working environment for our line workers.



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 or website chat 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.

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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: 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.