



Connection

PIEDMONT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE MEMBER NEWSLETTER | OCTOBER 2024



Fall Into Comfort: Preparing Your Home for Cooler Weather

Before the cooler Carolina weather commences, there are some simple changes you can make around your home to keep it cozy while prioritizing energy efficiency. Here are some practical tips to prepare your home for the colder months around the corner.

Caulk Gaps Around Doors and Windows

Even the smallest cracks around your doors and windows can let warm air escape and cold air seep in, leading to higher heating bills. Sealing these gaps can help maintain a comfortable temperature in your home and reduce the workload on your heating system, saving you energy and money.

Insulate Your Water Heater

Water heaters can lose heat through the tank's walls, so your heater must work harder to maintain the desired temperature. Adding insulation in the form of a water heater blanket can help reduce heat loss and improve efficiency.

Adjust the Water Heater Temperature

Speaking of your water heater, consider setting the temperature to 120°F. Even a slight adjustment can help reduce energy consumption while providing plenty of hot water for your family's needs.

Replace Your Air Filters

Regularly replacing your air filters helps your HVAC system maintain good airflow and ensures your heating system operates efficiently. A dirty filter can restrict airflow, causing your system to work harder and use more energy. By changing the air filter once a month, you'll not only improve your home's energy efficiency but also enhance indoor air quality.

Join Our Energy-Saving Programs

Signing up for our programs can also help you save money during the colder months. Our time-of-day program offers lower electricity rates during off-peak hours, allowing you to shift energy-intensive activities like laundry to off-peak times to reduce energy costs.

Our water heater load management program is another option to consider, which pays a monthly \$1 bill credit for participation. Once enrolled, your electric water heater will cycle off to reduce energy usage. In most cases, you will not notice when your tank cycles off, as it will have a reserve of hot water ready for use.

Start making these simple changes today for a more efficient fall and winter.

IMPORTANT DATES

Sept. 27 - Oct. 6

National Drive Electric Week

October

National Co-op Month

Oct. 1

EV Event in Carrboro Plaza from 2-4 p.m.

Oct. 16

Winter Time-of-Day Rate Schedule Begins

Shift your energy use on weekday mornings away from 6-10 a.m.

- 16 **Spotlight on Our Co-op Values: Democratic Member Control**
- 17 **Serving on the Piedmont Electric Board of Directors**
- 18 **Scare Away Energy Vampires and Phantom Loads This Halloween**



October is National Co-op Month!

Check out our Carolina Country cover wrap to learn more.

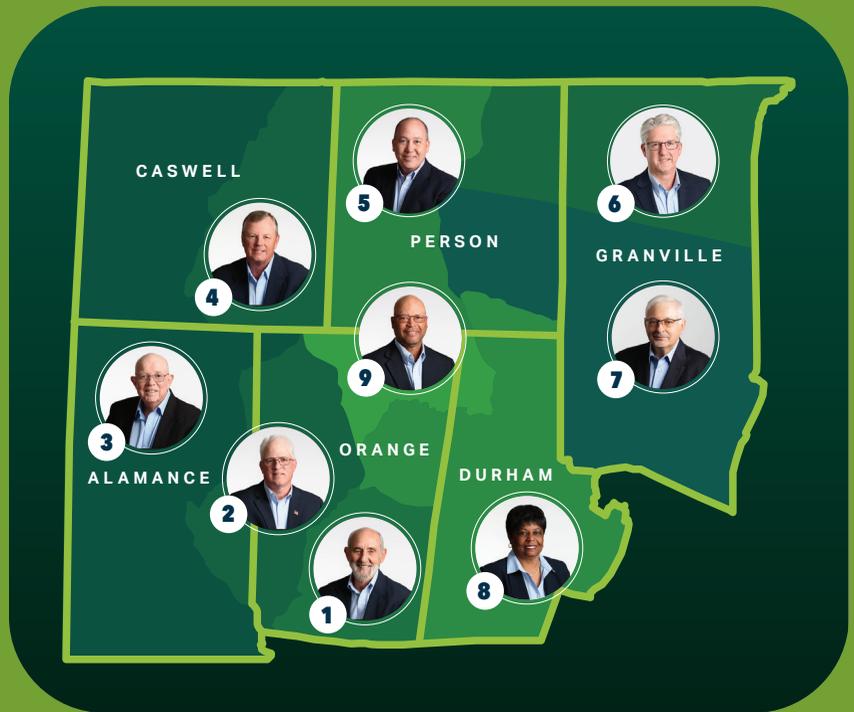
Learn More

Visit pemc.coop/smart-energy for more information or call 800.222.3107 to speak to one of our helpful member service representatives.

Spotlight on Our Co-op Values: Democratic Member Control

As we celebrate National Co-op Month in October, we recognize the unique values of the cooperative structure. On the inside front cover of this month's issue of Carolina Country, you'll see the seven cooperative principles that drive what we do, including the second one, "Democratic Member Control."

This principle means our members have a direct say in how the co-op runs. This democratic approach makes our cooperative more responsive and connected to the people we serve. So participate in April of each year by voting in the annual board election.



What It Means to Serve on Our Board

Our board members play an essential role in ensuring that our organization adheres to its principles and effectively serves our members' best interests. Board members help guide our cooperative. They also stay up-to-date on industry trends and regulations to make smart decisions that benefit our members.

What sets electric cooperatives apart from traditional electric utilities is that they are member-controlled and not driven by shareholders. As a not-for-profit co-op, decisions are made with our members' best interests in mind rather than the bottom line. This approach means our cooperative's policies and initiatives reflect what our members want and need. Visit pemc.coop/board to learn more about the duties and responsibilities of our board members and view the bylaws.

How to Become a Board Member

We are often asked why our elections are uncontested. The simple answer is that there are not always enough members interested in running for the board. If you'd like to help change that, the first step is to check the qualifications listed in section 4.02 of our bylaws. If you meet the qualifications, email Piedmont.Board@pemc.coop with your name, address and interest in a director position. Doing this will help us verify your membership and qualifications and determine if your district is up for election at the next annual meeting.

Our districts include the following:

- **Orange County:** Districts 1, 2, 3, 8 and 9
- **Alamance County:** District 2 and 3
- **Caswell County:** District 3 and 4
- **Person County:** District 5, 6, 7 and 8
- **Granville County:** Districts 6 and 7
- **Durham County:** District 8 and 9



You can learn more about the nomination process on the next page.

Serving on the Piedmont Electric Board of Directors

As your local electric co-op, Piedmont Electric Cooperative is guided by a board of directors composed of nine members from across our service area. These board members provide guidance and oversight and help shape the strategic direction of the cooperative alongside our staff. This member-driven process sets us apart from other electric utilities, ensuring that the local needs of Piedmont Electric members are heard and met. Directors are elected on a three-year rotation, nominated by a committee of members, and must meet the requirements outlined below.

The following is an excerpt from our bylaws about nominations.

SECTION 4.06. Nominations.

(A) NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

It shall be the duty of the Board to appoint a Nominations Committee consisting of nine (9) persons who are members but are not directors or close relatives of directors, and who are so selected that each of the Cooperative’s Directorate Districts shall have one representative thereon. The Committee shall meet and nominate candidates for each of the Cooperative’s Directorate Districts to be elected at the next annual meeting. The Committee shall nominate at least one (1) nominee for each such District and may nominate more than one (1) nominee for each such District. The Committee shall show clearly each nominee(s) and the Directorate District for which they are nominated. The Committee shall ensure that all members nominated meet the qualifications to serve as a director set forth in section 4.02. The Committee shall meet as necessary in order to complete its nominations no later than

thirty days preceding the deadline for nomination by petition as is set forth in the following subsection to provide the opportunity for any qualified member who desires to be placed on the ballot at the upcoming annual meeting but not nominated by the Committee, to seek nomination by petition as set forth in the following subsection.

(B) NOMINATIONS BY PETITION

Any fifty (50) or more members of the Cooperative, acting together, may make additional nominations in writing over their signatures, in like manner listing the nominees separately with respect to the Directorate Districts from which they are nominated, on or before January 14 preceding the annual meeting at which such directors are to be elected. Any member nominated by petition as a candidate for any Directorate must meet the qualifications to serve as a director set forth in section 4.02 before the nominee’s name may be placed on the ballot for election at the annual meeting.

(C) PROVIDING NOTICE OF ELECTIONS

The Secretary shall communicate to the members through any publication routinely used by the Cooperative for communication with the membership on a monthly basis or by electronic means at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting, the names of all nominees for each such district, showing separately those nominated by the Committee and those nominated by petition, if any.

(D) POSTING OF NOMINATIONS

Once the signatures of the members on any petition and the qualifications to serve of the nominees are verified, the names of all nominees for each directorate district shall be posted at the principal office of the Cooperative. The Posted Notice of all nominees shall show the directorate for which each nominee seeks election as director and may indicate those nominated by the nominations committee and those nominated by petition.

Revised 9/19/22

OFFICIAL NOTICE

Nominating Committee Meets Nov. 23

Three seats on the Piedmont Electric board of directors are up for election in 2025. These seats are currently held by Stephen C. Long (District 4), Darren Chalk (District 6) and Richal Vanhook (District 9). As a reminder, there will be no voting at the annual meeting. All voting will be conducted online or by mail-in ballot. Districts 1, 2 and 5 will be up for election in 2026 and Districts 3, 7 and 8 in 2027.

The members serving on the nominating committee are:

JOE CURRIN

Chapel Hill, District 1

GREGORY RUDD

Yanceyville, District 3

ADAM SARVER

Roxboro, District 5

MARTIN A. DAVIS

Timberlake, District 7

SYLVIA WADE

Rougemont, District 9

GREG MARTIN

Mebane, District 2

DIANNE MURPHY

Mebane, District 4

MARK RAMEY

Roxboro, District 6

ALVIS LONG

Hillsborough, District 8



Scare Away Energy Vampires and Phantom Loads This Halloween

As Halloween draws near, it's not just ghosts and goblins we need to be wary of—your home might also be haunted by something spooky. Energy vampires, or phantom loads, are stealthy power drainers that can drive up your electricity bills without you even noticing.

Understanding these energy fiends and how to identify them can help you save money and make your home more energy efficient.

Energy Vampires and Phantom Loads Lurking in Your Home

Energy vampires are devices and appliances that continue to draw power even when turned off or in standby mode. Think of phone chargers left plugged in, gaming consoles on pause or microwaves with digital clocks. These sneaky devices suck electricity all day and night, much like a vampire silently draining its victim's energy.

Although each device may only use a small amount of electricity on its own, together, these phantom loads can add up to a significant portion of your energy consumption, haunting your electricity bills month after month.

How to Identify These Spooky Phenomenons Around Your Home

To uncover these hidden energy users, visit [pemc.coop/energy-calculators](https://www.pemc.coop/energy-calculators) and use our online energy calculators. These tools can help you identify which devices in your home are the biggest culprits of wasted energy. By inputting information about your appliances and electronics, these calculators can estimate their energy usage so you know how much they impact your bill.

The Scary-Good Value of Electricity

With Halloween around the corner, it's the perfect time to compare the cost of electricity to some of our favorite festive purchases.

- For the price of a Halloween-themed inflatable lawn decoration, you can run your washing machine for 1,650 hours, so your favorite costumes are always clean.
- For the price of a pack of Halloween party decorations, you can stay cozy under an electric blanket for 631 hours.
- For the price of a haunted forest ticket, you can use your microwave for 275 hours, making popcorn for a scary movie marathon.

**Energy use estimates come from energy.gov and include a washer that uses 255 Watts per hour, a \$50 lawn inflatable, an electric blanket that uses 400 Watts per hour, a \$30 pack of Halloween party decorations, a microwave that uses 1500 Watts per hour and a \$49 haunted forest ticket.*

Beware of Utility Scams: Protect Yourself and Your Community

Utility scams are unfortunately common and can happen to anyone, not just members of Piedmont Electric Cooperative. Because everyone has utility bills, scammers often target utility companies, posing as legitimate employees or representatives to steal money or personal information.

At Piedmont Electric, we want to reassure you that we will never demand immediate payment or threaten to disconnect your service without prior notice. Our priority is to work with our members to resolve any

issues and avoid service interruptions. We are always here to verify any information you need, and we can research visits, payments and account details in our system.

While we can't prevent scammers from attempting to impersonate us, we are committed to protecting your account. Here's how you can stay safe:

1. Visit SmartHub for real-time account balances.
2. Call 800.222.3107 to speak with a member service representative (MSR) or use our automated payment line to check your balance and due date.

3. Remember that we will always communicate with you about a planned visit, announce our arrival or leave a door hanger for visits.

If you ever suspect a scam, please don't hesitate to reach out to us at 800.222.3107. By notifying Piedmont Electric about potential scams, you help protect yourself and our community. Together, we can create the first line of defense against fraud.

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.

2500 NC Highway 86 South
PO Drawer 1179
Hillsborough, NC 27278

Jordan Overbee
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: 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.