



Connection

PIEDMONT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE MEMBER NEWSLETTER | NOVEMBER 2024



Smart Savings With Your Co-op

With turkey day just around the corner, we would all be thankful for a few extra dollars in our pocket. Whether you're deciding between pecan or pumpkin pie or whether you want stuffing or dressing, go ahead and fill up your cart because these tips will help you save energy and money this Thanksgiving.

Monitor Energy Use With the SmartHub App

One of the easiest ways to save is by using our free SmartHub app. This powerful tool allows you to track your daily energy usage, helping you spot trends and make adjustments to impact your bill.

You can also turn on daily energy use alerts and notifications about unusual spikes in your usage so you're not caught off guard by a higher-than-normal bill at the end of the month.

Visit pemc.smarthub.coop or download the SmartHub app on your smartphone or tablet to start tracking your energy use.

Make Small Changes Around Your House

Making small, energy-efficient updates around your home can lead to noticeable savings. Simple actions like replacing incandescent bulbs with LEDs, sealing drafty windows and doors and adjusting your thermostat by a few degrees can reduce excess energy use.

Unplugging devices that are not in use can also prevent phantom energy drain and help you cut costs with minimal effort.

Sign up for Our Money-Saving Programs

One of our goals as your co-op is to help you save on energy costs. Joining programs like load management allows you to save on water heating costs year-round and offers monthly bill credits for additional savings.

Another program to consider is our time-of-day rate, which provides a lower rate for the energy you use during off-peak times. The average time-of-day participant saves around \$20 per month! Learn how to sign up by visiting pemc.coop/special-rates.

Use Our Online Tools and Calculators

We offer a variety of free tools and calculators to help you better understand your energy use. These resources allow you to see which areas of your house use the most energy and identify areas where you can cut back to lower your bill. Try them out by visiting pemc.coop/energy-calculators.

IMPORTANT DATES

Nov. 11
Veterans Day

Nov. 28 - 29
Thanksgiving

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

Dec. 3

Giving Tuesday

Support our local community by donating to the Helping Hand Foundation at pemc.coop/donate.

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As we prepare to celebrate Veterans Day, we'd like to honor and thank all the brave men and women who have served our country. We are forever grateful for your service.

Avoid Using Costly Emergency Strip Heat This Winter

When the temperatures drop, using the emergency heat setting on your thermostat may be tempting. While it's an important option for extreme situations, it's best to avoid using it for regular heating. Here's what you need to know about avoiding emergency strip heat this winter.



What Is Emergency Heat?

Emergency strip heat is a backup heating mode designed for use when your primary heating system cannot maintain the desired temperature in your home. It uses electric resistance coils to generate heat, which can be very costly to run.

This mode is designed for extreme weather conditions or system malfunctions and should not be the first choice for daily heating needs due to its high energy consumption and cost.

Know Your Heating System

Different heating systems have varying components and settings, so familiarize yourself with how your system operates. Knowing your system's settings and functions will help you better manage its performance and avoid using auxiliary heat sources like emergency strip heat.

Why You Should Avoid Using It

Relying on emergency heat can lead to significantly higher utility bills. When you turn on this setting, your system bypasses the heat pump and uses the electric heat strips instead. This puts a strain on the backup element, which is only meant to be used for short periods of time in emergencies.

This excess strain can reduce your system's lifespan, leading to more frequent repairs. Reserving this mode for genuine emergencies helps you manage your energy costs and maintains your system's efficiency.

How to Avoid Using Emergency Strip Heat

When you adjust the temperature of your thermostat, be sure to make small, 1- or 2-degree changes to avoid using emergency heat. For example, if you set your house to 63 degrees when you leave and then change it to 68

degrees when you get home then your emergency heat will likely turn on to help warm your house as quickly as possible.

If you raise the temperature gradually, the system will work more efficiently without using emergency heat which will save you money. You can also use a programmable thermostat to create a heating schedule that will gradually increase the temperature throughout the day.

During extremely cold weather, supplement your heating system with a space heater if you are heating a single, small space, then lower the thermostat setting for the rest of the house. Most importantly, don't turn on the emergency heat setting unless your system is not working correctly and it's a critical situation.



Get 50% off Energy Use While You Feast

This Thanksgiving, you can carve out big savings by signing up for our time-of-day program, which offers half-priced power for the energy you use during off-peak hours. This includes most holidays like Thanksgiving! As you prepare for the biggest dinner of the year, this special rate allows you to focus on enjoying the holiday instead of worrying about a high energy bill.

Whether you're cooking up your favorite fall dishes or relaxing on the couch watching the game, you'll be thankful for lower rates as a time-of-day participant. By joining this program, high-energy tasks like baking pies, snuggling under an electric blanket or even turning on the holiday lights can all be more affordable. This lets you gobble up the savings without cutting back on your favorite holiday traditions.

Outside of holidays, you'll also pay a lower rate during off-peak hours, which include Saturday, Sunday and 19-20 hours of every weekday. By scheduling big energy-using tasks outside of 6-10 a.m. during the winter, you can keep your energy costs more manageable while focusing on the things that matter most during this special time of year.

When you're ready to give yourself one more thing to be grateful for this Thanksgiving, visit pemc.coop/special-rates to learn more about this program and how to sign up.

Giving Our Communities a Helping Hand This Holiday Season

We believe in the power of neighbors helping neighbors, which is the spirit behind our Helping Hand Foundation. When we all come together to help those in need, even the smallest donation can help brighten the holidays for those around us.



How the Helping Hand Foundation Supports Those in Need

Members like you play a crucial role in the Helping Hand Foundation. Your contributions, no matter how small, help fund our initiatives. By rounding up your bills to the nearest dollar each month, you directly support our community through initiatives like college scholarships, basketball camp scholarships, food and clothing drives, Bright Ideas teacher grants and more. Your role is integral to our success and we appreciate your participation.

The Foundation also provides energy assistance to members going through a tough time and struggling to make ends meet. We can all use some support now and then, and the Helping Hand Foundation allows us to provide that assistance to those who need it.

Since 2017, we've helped thousands in need in our service area thanks to your donations.

Spread Some Joy With a Donation

If you'd like to help put a smile on someone's face this holiday season, consider making a one-time or recurring donation to the Helping Hand Foundation using any of the following methods:

- Add it to your bill: Log in to your SmartHub account to schedule a donation on your power bill.
- Online: Visit pemc.smarthub.coop/PayNow, enter your account number as "1" and your name as "Helping Hand" to make an online donation.
- By mail: Mail checks payable to "Helping Hand Foundation" to Attn: Helping Hand Foundation, Piedmont Electric Membership Corporation, P.O. Drawer 1179, Hillsborough, NC 27278.

- Donate your capital credits: You can cash or deposit your capital credit check and then donate online or by mail using the instructions above.
- Donate future capital credits: Donate your future capital credits by filling out our capital credits beneficiary designation form and selecting option 2.

Learn more about how to donate by visiting pemc.coop/donate. Donations may be tax deductible, please consult a tax professional.



Giving Tuesday Is Dec. 3
 This Giving Tuesday, consider donating to the Helping Hand Foundation to make a meaningful impact in our community and help those in need.

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.