



Connection

PIEDMONT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE MEMBER NEWSLETTER | DECEMBER 2024



Bill Assistance Programs Are Here When You Need Them

Unexpected financial struggles can affect anyone. During these times, having help and support makes all the difference. We offer several assistance options to provide relief and peace of mind for those who need a little extra support.

Payment Extensions

If you need immediate assistance, we are here to work with you to keep your service from being disconnected. Qualified members can temporarily extend the due date on their current bill through SmartHub or by calling **800.222.3107**.

Please keep in mind that once you have an extension granted, it's not permanent. The due date will return to the original due date on your next bill. Learn more about how to extend your due date by visiting pemc.coop/payment-extensions.

Payment Assistance

Sometimes, a payment extension is not enough. In that case, we're here to connect you with additional resources. We are happy to point you in the direction of organizations that offer energy assistance.

Once you've been approved for help, the organizations will call us to confirm your information and send a pledge on your behalf, which will be posted to your account. View these assistance programs at pemc.coop/payment-assistance.

Payment Options

We understand that what works best for one family might not be the right option for another. We are proud to offer the following payment options so you can pay your bill in a way that works for you:

- **Automatic bank draft:** Have your bill paid automatically by bank, debit or credit card draft, so it's one less thing to think about.
- **Equal payment options:** Pay the same amount each month so you know what to expect when you receive your bill. The amount is based on your previous 12 months of energy use, which is set for 11 months. In the 12th month, you'll receive a "settle-up" payment and a new equal payment amount will be set.
- **Prepay:** Pay on your own schedule with our prepay option. Add money to your account when it's convenient for you and sign up for low balance alerts so you know when to make another payment.

Visit pemc.coop/payment-options to learn more.

IMPORTANT DATES

Dec. 3

Giving Tuesday

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

Dec. 24-25

Christmas

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

Jan. 1

New Year's

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

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It's capital credit season! Turn to page 18 and check out the inside back cover of this magazine for your guide to capital credits.

POWER UP YOUR NEW YEAR: Energy-Saving Strategies for 2025

As we prepare to ring in a new year, it's the perfect time to focus on energy-saving strategies that can help reduce your bill and make your home more efficient. By taking advantage of our money-saving tools and programs, you can make your New Year's energy resolutions a reality.

Sign Up for Our Energy-Saving Programs

Kick off the new year by joining our programs to help you lower your energy consumption and reduce costs. The more programs you join, the easier it is to save!

- **Time-of-day rate:** Get half-priced power for the energy you use during off-peak hours. This includes Saturdays, Sundays, most holidays and 19-20 hours of every weekday. When you make minor adjustments to shift your energy use away from on-peak hours, saving is a breeze. The average member saved more than \$20 per month by participating in this program last year! Learn how to join by visiting pemc.coop/special-rates.
- **Smart thermostat savings program:** Nest smart thermostat owners can receive an initial \$50 rebate and ongoing energy savings by joining this program. When you participate, Piedmont Electric will make small adjustments to your thermostat through your in-home Wi-Fi on hot summer days. Along with energy savings, you'll receive monthly bill credits from June through September by participating. Visit pemc.coop/thermostats to learn more.
- **Load management:** One of the easiest ways to save is by participating in our load management programs. When you join, we'll install load control switches at your home. During periods of high energy demand, the switches will cycle your air conditioner and turn off your electric water heater to reduce usage. The air conditioning program pays a monthly bill credit from June through September, and the water heater program pays a credit each month of the year. Sign up at pemc.coop/load-management.

Schedule a Free Home Energy Analysis

If you want to maximize your savings this year, schedule a free in-home energy analysis with one of our specialists. They'll come to your home and make suggestions for no- or low-cost home comfort improvements that can lower your bill.

This service is free and available to all Piedmont Electric members! Schedule yours by visiting pemc.coop/home-energy-advisor today.





Use Our DIY Energy Advisor Tool

When you want to make thoughtful changes to how you use energy in your home, the best thing to do is determine areas of improvement. Our DIY energy advisor tool is the easiest way to get these insights. To get started, visit pemc.coop/diy-energy-advisor. There, you'll answer questions about your home.

The tool will analyze your answers and give you a detailed breakdown of your annual electricity costs by month based on factors like the size of your home, the amount of insulation in your home, your HVAC system, your water heater, your thermostat settings and your appliances.

It will also give you personalized recommendations on how to save energy and money based on the specifics of your house.

Sign Up for Energy Usage Alerts

Many of us don't realize how much electricity we're using, which can make it difficult to know how to make meaningful changes. As your co-op, we make it easy for you to get insights into your usage so you can better manage your bill.

Log in to your SmartHub account, then select "Notifications" and "Manage Contacts" to set up your email address. Then, under "Reports," you can turn on daily usage emails to receive insights about how you use energy delivered to your inbox. If you're not interested in daily alerts, you can opt to receive mid-cycle alerts after the first two weeks of the month or monthly usage overviews instead.

Another option is to sign up for Beat the Peak, where you'll receive notices of expected peak times. When members reduce energy use during these periods, we can reduce the co-op's power costs, helping us all save.

To sign up, text **BTPEAK** to **800.222.3107** or email BeatThePeak@pemc.coop with your name and email address.

Add Smart Energy Items to Your Christmas List

Keep the savings going all year by asking for smart gifts this holiday season! Here are some of our favorite ideas:

- Battery-powered tools and lawn equipment
- Nest thermostat
- Electric bikes
- Electric grills
- Rechargeable candle lighters
- Portable power stations and banks

Learn more about some of our favorite smart lighting gifts at pemc.coop/smart-lighting.

We hope these ideas leave you feeling inspired to make 2025 your most energy-efficient year yet!

OFFICIAL NOTICE

What Are Capital Credits and How Are They Calculated?

Because we're a not-for-profit cooperative, we return margins back to our members in the form of capital credits.

The amount you're owed is based upon the amount of revenue you contribute to the cooperative through payment of your monthly bills during a year in which the co-op collected more than it spent. This year, we're retiring capital credits of more than \$1 million from 1997.

Our member-elected board of directors determines whether our co-op's financial position permits the return of capital credits, the amount of which will be returned to members and which year or years are returned. Holding capital credits helps keep our rates low as it lowers the amount of funds we need to borrow in a given year.

When to Expect Your Capital Credits

If you were a member in 1997 and your capital credit is less than \$75, then you'll see your capital credit as a credit on your December bill.

If you're owed \$75 or more, you'll receive a check in the mail by the end of December with your full credit. That's all there is to it!

Unclaimed Capital Credits

Have any of your friends or family members moved out of the Piedmont Electric service area over the last few years?

If a member moves away and we don't have their new address, they could have money waiting for them in the form of capital credits or uncashed checks.

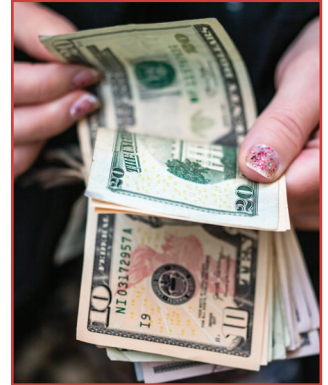
Visit pemc.coop/capital-credits to search for unclaimed capital credits for your friends and family members who have moved.

We always attempt to contact former members that are owed money, but if capital credits go unclaimed for more than four years, they have to be turned over to the state treasurer's office. That money can be claimed by visiting nccash.com.

Thanks in advance for helping us return money to former members!

Use Capital Credits to Pay It Forward

If you'd like to spread some joy this holiday season, you can donate your capital credit to our Helping Hand Foundation to help support those in our community who need energy assistance or help your community in other ways. To do so, cash or deposit your capital credit and then donate it by mail or online at pemc.coop/donate.



You can also donate future capital credits to the foundation by filling out our capital credits beneficiary designation form, selecting option 2 and returning the notarized form to us. Learn more about capital credit beneficiary options by visiting pemc.coop/beneficiary.

Go Paperless This Holiday Season

It's the most wonderful time of the year, but it's also one of the busiest times at the post office as people send cards and packages to loved ones around the country. Unfortunately, this means it's more common for mail to be delayed or lost amid all the hustle and bustle.

If you still receive or pay your electricity bill through the mail, don't risk it getting lost this year. Switch to paperless billing so you will always receive your bill on time and lighten the load for postal workers in the process.



Make the switch by logging in to your SmartHub account, then navigate to "My Information" and "Update My Paperless Settings." From there, change the "Printed Bill Status" slider to the "OFF" position, and you're all set.

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:
Monday-Friday 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.