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Office Hours

8 a.m.–5 p.m.

Monday–Friday

Corporate Headquarters

1355 East McIver Road

PO Box 491

Darlington, SC 29540

District Office

1811 North 501 Bypass

Marion, SC

Report Power Outage

(843) 665-4070

Toll-Free (866) 747-0060

Web site

PeeDeeElectric.com

Co-op News Editor

Tom Kinard



Your Touchstone Energy® Partner

Protecting Your Interests

We're looking out for you in Washington and Columbia

THROUGHOUT OUR CO-OP'S HISTORY, THE actions of federal and state governments have affected our ability to serve you, our members. That's why we make an effort to act as your voice with policy-makers at the state and federal level.



We work with other co-ops through our statewide association to represent you in the U.S. Capitol and the SC State House. In May, representatives of your co-op and others across America will converge on Washington, D.C., to meet with our congressmen and senators. We'll urge them to minimize the impact of energy and climate legislation on your electricity costs. All year, our national co-op association as well as consumer advocates from South Carolina are looking out for you in Washington.

The state effort doesn't let up either. Early this year, Pee Dee Electric Cooperative and other SC co-ops welcomed legislators back for another session. During each session, a truly "cooperative" team, made up of government relations specialists from co-ops around the state, monitors any state government actions.

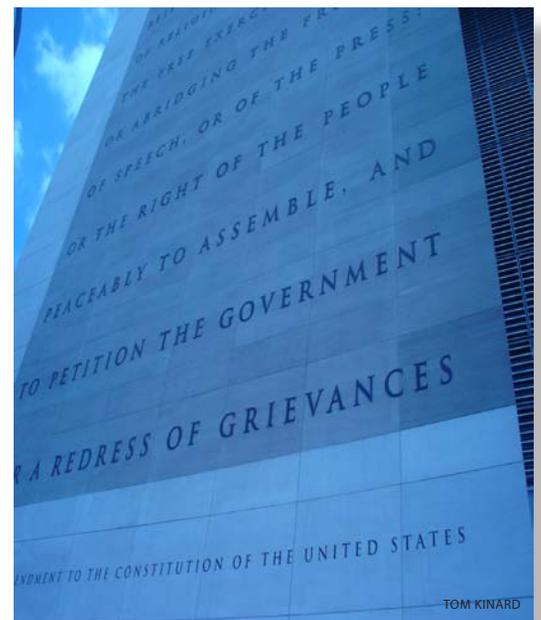
On both state and federal levels, we often advance ideas that could help our members.

We thank the legislators who represent the citizens of the communities served by Pee Dee Electric Cooperative. They include: US Senators Lindsay Graham and Jim DeMint, US Congressmen Jim Clyburn and John Spratt, State Senators Hugh Leathermen, Dick Elliott, Vincent Sheheen, Gerald Malloy and Kent Williams and State Representatives Terry Alexander, Lester Branham, Jim Battle, Jackie Hayes, Doug Jennings, Denny Neilson, Robert Williams, Kris Crawford, Phillip Lowe, Ted Vick, Jay Lucas and Grady Brown.

The next time you see these folks, tell them you appreciate their efforts on behalf of your cooperative!

James A. Goodson

Chairman, Board of Trustees



TOM KINARD

Members Reminded of Income Tax Credit

PEE DEE ELECTRIC AND OTHER COOPERATIVES ARE HELPING THE the Internal Revenue Service spread the word about a commonly overlooked tax credit, one that can benefit many co-op members.

The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is a refundable federal credit for low- to moderate-income working individuals and families. To qualify, taxpayers must meet certain requirements. They must file a tax return, even if they did not earn enough money to be obligated to file one.

To claim the credit, taxpayers are required to meet the following rules:

- ▶ Must have earned income
- ▶ Must have a valid Social Security number
- ▶ Investment income is limited to \$3,100 or less
- ▶ Cannot use “married filing separately” filing status
- ▶ Generally must be a U.S. citizen or resident alien all year
- ▶ Cannot be a qualifying child of another person
- ▶ Cannot file Form 2555 or 2555-EZ (related to foreign earned income).

Taxpayers need to have worked and have earned income less than:

- ▶ \$13,440 (\$18,440 if married filing jointly) with no qualifying children
- ▶ \$35,463 (\$40,463 if married filing jointly) with one qualifying child
- ▶ \$40,295 (\$45,295 if married filing jointly) with two qualifying children
- ▶ \$43,279 (\$48,279 married filing jointly) with three or more qualifying children

Note: To qualify, the child must meet the relationship, age and residency tests. For details, access irs.gov/eitc or call 1-800-TAX-1040.

You Have Our Number — Do We Have Yours?



Our outage management system is designed to help you. Now, please help us help you!

We need your correct telephone number in our system to dispatch crews as quickly as possible.

This number should be for a phone associated with the account, which is often one at the service location. We realize many members no longer have land-line phones, so we do accept cell phone numbers.

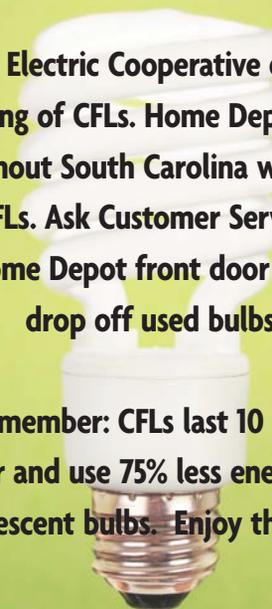
If you're not sure we have your current number, check your bill for the number listed or call a customer/member service representative at 843-665-4070 or 866-747-0060. Thank you.

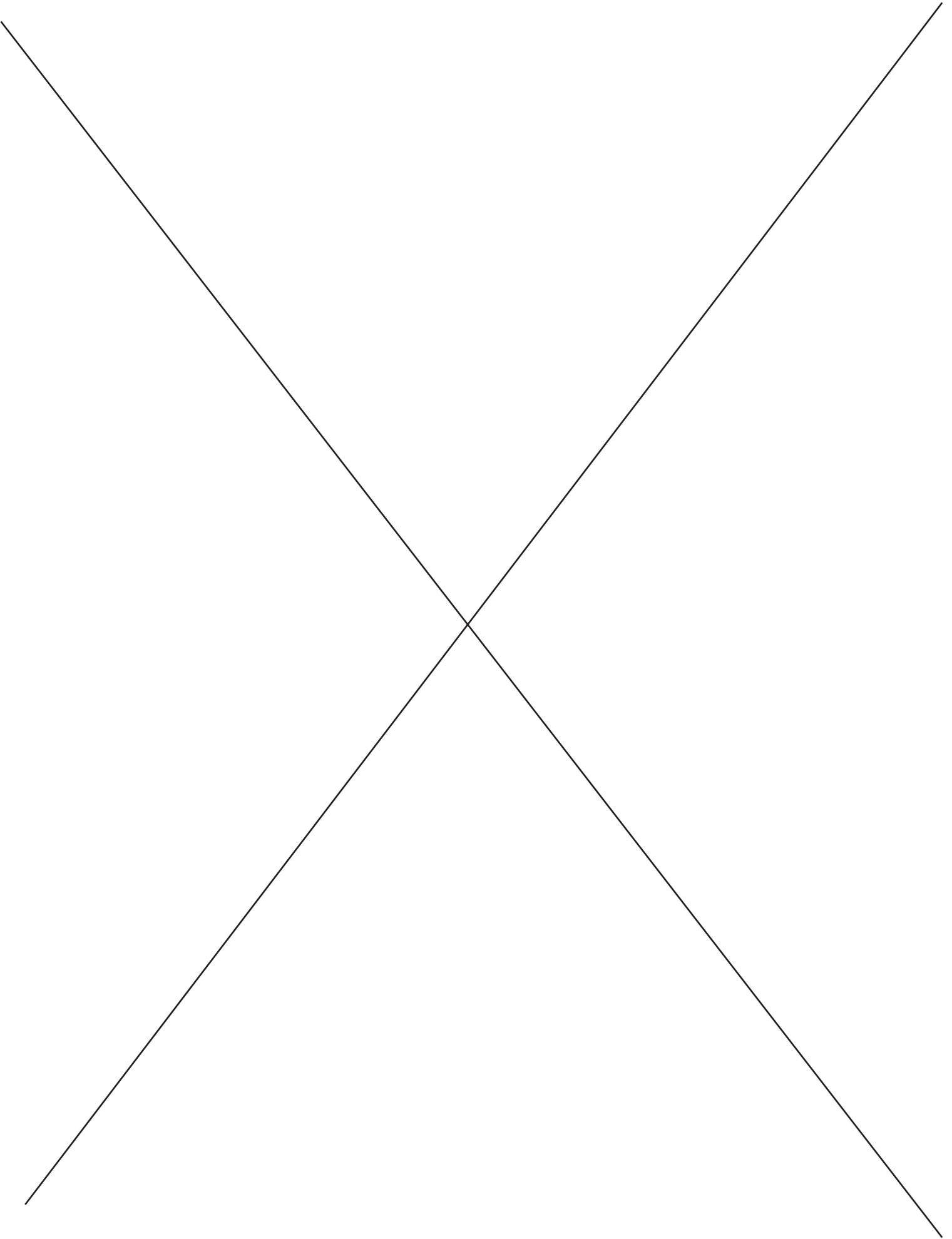


It's Easy To Recycle CFLs!

Pee Dee Electric Cooperative encourages recycling of CFLs. Home Depot stores throughout South Carolina will recycle used CFLs. Ask Customer Service inside the Home Depot front door where to drop off used bulbs.

Remember: CFLs last 10 times longer and use 75% less energy than incandescent bulbs. Enjoy the savings.





What to Do If You Lose Power

If your lights go out:

▶ Check your circuit breakers or fuses. If no breaker is tripped or fuse is blown, the problem may be in the connection between our wires and your home. Call us toll-free, 24-hours-a-day 866-747-0060.

Steps to take during an outage:

▶ To safeguard your equipment and appliances - and to ease the initial load when power is restored - turn off or unplug stoves, ovens, televisions, VCRs, DVD players, stereos, computers, and appliances that use electric motors such as air conditioners. Leave a light on so you know when the power comes back on.

▶ Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed. These appliances are well insulated, so food will keep for hours if opening the door is kept to a minimum.

▶ Use a flashlight or battery-powered lantern for light. Use care when burning candles; open flames are a dangerous fire hazard.



Jeff's Energy Tips

by Jeff Singletary
PDEC Energy Expert

Recently, I've had several churches contact me about lowering their energy bills. This month the tips are specifically, but not exclusively for churches. These tips will help save money in other buildings where people gather. Most will work in homes, too.

Since most houses of worship rely on small or non-existent budgets for capital projects, low- or no-cost measures that reduce energy consumption generally produce the best results. Some simple steps involve changing the way members of the congregation and staff use the building. Big-ticket items, such as replacing heating and cooling systems with more energy-efficient units, may not be practical until existing equipment reaches the end of its useful life. Below are some suggestions for reducing energy consumption:

- ▶ Turn off the lights when not in use. While occupancy sensors can be cost-effective, posting reminders to ensure the lights are turned off often does the trick. Timers or motion detectors are useful in lobbies, entries, and vestibules.
- ▶ Replace incandescent lightbulbs with compact fluorescent lights (CFLs).
- ▶ Control "plug loads," such as microwaves, computers, and televisions that continue to draw power even when turned off. Unplug these appliances when finished using or before leaving the building.
- ▶ Heat and cool during occupied hours only. Make sure that heating and cooling controls are set at minimum levels or are switched off during periods of no use.
- ▶ Turn down water heater thermostats. Bathrooms and kitchens used primarily during worship services are good targets for lowering water temperatures.
- ▶ Change filters. Filters should be changed on a monthly basis.
- ▶ Clean condenser coils. Condenser coils should be washed thoroughly at the beginning and end of the cooling season.
- ▶ Seal gaps. Use caulk and weather stripping to seal gaps around windows, doors, chimneys, and other structural elements, including the foundation.
- ▶ Insulate hot water pipes with pipe insulation. Fix leaky faucets, pipes, and toilets.

WIRE to Award \$2,500 Jenny Ballard Opportunity Scholarship

The Jenny Ballard Opportunity Scholarship is awarded by the SC WIRE to a woman who may not have been able to attend college when she graduated from high school, but now wants to further her education. The \$2,500 one-time scholarship will be presented to an electric cooperative member in South Carolina based on financial need and her personal goals.

Applicants for the Scholarship must:

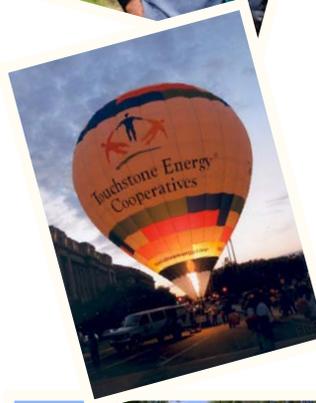
- Be a member of a South Carolina electric cooperative
- Have graduated from high school or earned a GED before 2000
- Be accepted into an accredited South Carolina college or university
- Demonstrate financial need

Women who have previously obtained a four-year college degree are not eligible for this scholarship; however, applicants may have previously earned a two-year degree or some college credits.



The winner will receive the scholarship for the Fall 2010 or Spring 2011 Semester. Deadline for applications is June 1. They may be down-loaded at PDEC's Web site PeeDeeElectric.com or you may contact Page Chestnut at (843) 292-4345.

The WIRE Opportunity Scholarship is named for Jenny Ballard, an early leader of WIRE. (Women Involved in Rural Electrification).



Going on Vacation?

Don't Come Home to a House Without Power

Power use in the home does not stop unless you turn off the main breaker or request to have the meter physically disconnected by Pee Dee Electric Cooperative. Otherwise, refrigerators, freezers, TVs, battery chargers and water heaters continue to operate.

Make payment arrangements before you leave to prevent service from being unnecessarily disconnected during an extended absence. Call one of our Member Service Representatives at 665-4070 or toll free 866-747-0060. We'll help you determine how much to pre-pay on your account or get your authorization to charge a credit card.



Let the Sun Help

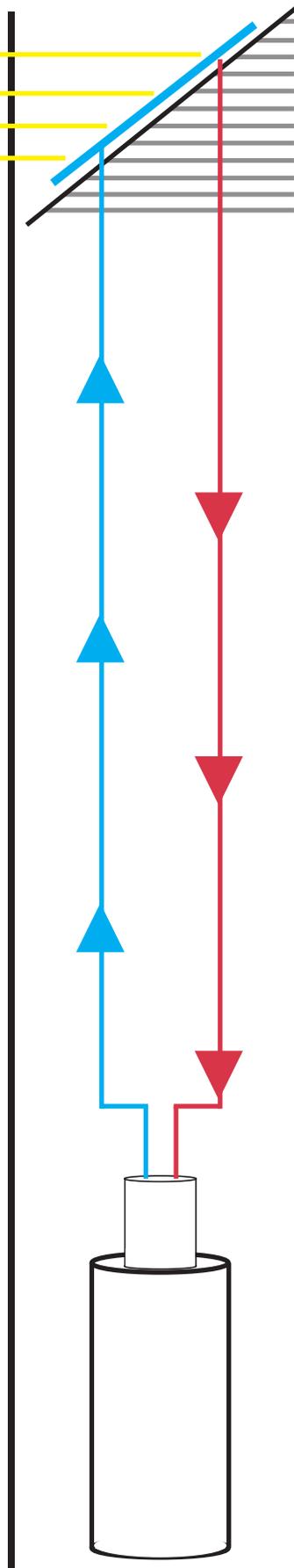
Apply for a solar thermal water heater

MEMBERS OF PEE DEE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE who own site-built homes can apply to upgrade their current electric water heater to an energy efficient solar thermal water heater system.

Participants selected for the Help My House Solar Thermal program will have the work done at no charge. The co-op is looking for site-built homes constructed between 1970 and 2008, with south-facing roofs. The roofs should have a pitch of 12/2-12/6, with minimal shading, and easy access to the attic and existing water heater. Pee Dee Electric Cooperative employees will visit the home to assess its physical condition and layout and to gather information prior to final acceptance in this program.

Interested? Fill out the application below and mail it in or log onto www.HelpMyHouse.org/solarthermal to fill out an online application. To be eligible, entries must be received by close of business April 30.

Selected participants will be notified by Friday, May 28. This new Help My House program is part of a study to validate the effectiveness of energy efficiency technologies for people who live in South Carolina. The study is made possible by a grant from the South Carolina Energy Office and Central Electric Power Cooperative, Pee Dee Electric's wholesale power provider.



Solar Thermal application

Name _____

Address _____

Phone: Day _____ Night _____

E-mail _____

My co-op is _____ Electric Account No. _____

Type of home: (circle one) site-built / manufactured

Size of home _____ sq. ft. Own home? yes / no Number of occupants _____

Do you have high-speed Internet in home? (circle one) yes / no

Electric water heater? (circle one) yes / no Age? _____ yrs Size? _____ gallons

Please include two photos, one of the entire front of your home and one of the back.

Help My House
www.HelpMyHouse.org

Incomplete applications may not be initially considered. Applicants must have lived in their home for at least two years. By submitting an application, you are agreeing to abide by the rules and regulations of the program. You can obtain a copy of the rules, and a full description of the energy-efficiency study, by visiting www.HelpMyHouse.org/solarthermal, calling (803) 739-5066, or sending a request to the address below.

Mail entry to: Help My House, 808 Knox Abbott Drive, Cayce SC 29033-3311

