

# Tideland Topics

*Real People. Real Power.*

## Winter rates *begin November 1*

Tideland residential members, the vast majority of which are billed under rate schedules 1 and 3, will see nearly a penny per kilowatt hour (kWh) rate decrease starting Nov. 1. Between May and October of each year, members in those rate classes are billed 12.48¢ per kWh. Between November and April, the winter rate per kWh is 11.49¢.

All energy sales, regardless of rate class, are subject to any wholesale power cost adjustments (WPCA) which can either be a charge or credit depending on market conditions and co-op inances. For the month of October, the WPCA was a charge of \$1.39 per 1,000 kWh.



## Rebate *reminder*

As 2023 winds down, a reminder to members that Tideland rebate applications need to be turned in within 90 days of project completion. Rebates are available for the purchase of an Energy Star-certified manufactured home, dual-fuel heat pump installations, high-efficiency heat pump installations (16 SEER or higher) and heat pump water heater installations.

For more information and to download a rebate application, visit [tidelandemc.com](http://tidelandemc.com).



Federal tax credits up to \$2,000 are also available for qualifying heat pump and heat pump water heater purchases





# Change coming to outage reporting

An early heads up, Tidelanders. The co-op will soon be changing the way members report power outages via text messaging. Under the current format, members text the word OUT to short code 85700.

We will be transitioning to a standard 10-digit phone number and away from the short code to improve message delivery when the co-op issues outage updates.

We anticipate making the change in early December, at which time we will send a text message with details to all members enrolled in the program. Details will also be made available in the December magazine.

In the meantime, you may continue to use the 85700 short code.

## Deal yourself an electric bill decrease 5 ways to save during heating season

We see you, cool weather lovers. You live for pumpkin spiced anything and everything, the comfort of knitted sweaters, and yes, some of you are already chomping at the bit to pull out the Christmas decorations. But there's one thing we can all agree on: high energy bills are never fun. Here are five tips to help increase your home's energy efficiency this fall and winter:

### 1. Mind the thermostat

This is one of the easiest ways to manage home energy use. We recommend setting your thermostat to 68 degrees (or lower) when you're home. If you have a heat pump, we recommend that you "set it and forget it" unless you are away for an extended period of time and can then bring the thermostat back up in two-degree increments to avoid unnecessary use of the supplemental heat strips. If you have an electric furnace or baseboard heat, thermostat setback is recommended overnight while you sleep or when you are away for hours at a time.



### 2. Button up your home

The Department of Energy estimates that air leaks account for 24% to 40% of the energy used for heating and cooling a home. We have found that much of that air leak can be attributed to poorly sealed HVAC ducts. While that

may sound daunting, it is a much less expensive fix than replacing your HVAC system or utilizing supplemental heating sources. At a minimum, please take a moment to look at every air register in your



house to see if it has a good air seal with your sub-floor or ceiling. All you need is a flashlight and perhaps a screwdriver to remove the air register grill.

If you have a doublewide mobile home you should annually check the home's crossover duct, which was likely originally joined with duct tape which loses its adhesiveness over time. Any leaky air register boots or crossover ducts should be sealed with a mastic paste or mastic tape.

Caulking and weather stripping around windows and doors is another simple, cost-effective way to increase comfort and save energy. If you feel drafts while standing near a window or door, it's a candidate for weatherizing.

Remember to close fireplace dampers when fireplaces aren't in use.

*Continues on Page H*

# Message to members

## Small change can change lives

by **PAUL SPRUILL**

GENERAL MANAGER &  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Tideland is one of more than 300 electric cooperatives in the nation that sponsor an Operation Round Up program. The one thing each co-ops' Operation Round Up program has in common is that they leverage local donations to help local people with no administrative costs or overhead. Volunteer boards determine the parameters for giving and in Tideland's case the decision was made to fund two programs: individual energy assistance grants through our Silver Lining program and college scholarships for local high school seniors.

However, one way Tideland differs from most co-ops is that we utilize an opt-in method for member enrollment rather than the more popular opt-out method. As a result, our Operation Round Up funding lags considerably behind the vast majority of co-ops nationally.

I firmly believe that if you take a moment to learn about the program and evaluate our

program's success that you will want to join your fellow members in donating to the program through the voluntarily enrollment of your electric account. Energy assistance grant funding details can be found on page F.

Operation Round Up donations average \$6 annually and can never exceed \$1 in a single month. Your December electric bill will document total giving for the calendar year.

If you are so moved, you can also opt to give more via fixed monthly giving. We refer to that as Operation Round Up Plus.

In either scenario, you can trust Tideland to be a good steward of any amount donated to the fund. You can also feel good about your donation knowing it stays local and helps those truly in need.

I hope you will consider enrolling today.

## Rights-of-way maintenance schedule

During the month of November, our tree trimming contractor, Lucas Tree Experts, will be working on the Craven County circuit out of our Edward substation.

We will also have Gunnison Tree Services working on the three circuits out of our Washington substation: Country Club, Pamlico Plantation, and Pamlico Village.

Lee Construction crews will be working on the Swan Quarter circuit, replacing poles and changing out conductor.

### Friendly Reminder:

Fall is a popular time for planting new trees. As you make your tree selection, please consider the mature height and width of the species before purchase. At maturity the tree should be out of both the fall zone and the trim zone of existing overhead powerlines.

If your home or neighborhood is serviced by underground lines, make sure you know where lines are buried before planting.

## Holiday Closing

Tideland offices will be closed Thursday, Nov. 23, and Friday, Nov. 24, for the Thanksgiving Holiday.

Our 24-hour call center will remain open and on-call crews remain on standby for outages and service emergencies. To report a power outage call 800.882.1001 or text OUT to short code 85700. Member service is available at 252.943.3046.





# Team Tideland

## Gift Giving made easy

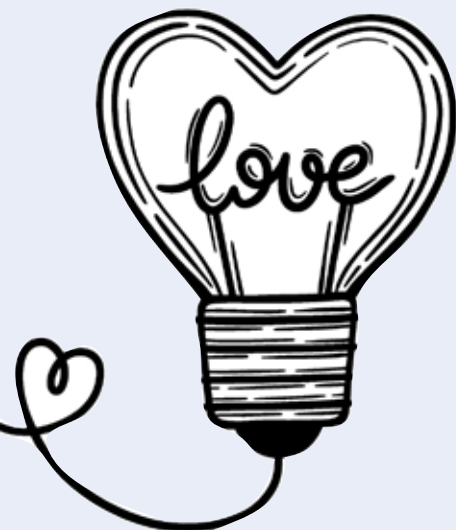
Want to brighten the upcoming holiday season for someone special?

Give a H.U.G.  
A home utility gift!

We'll be glad to credit any Tideland EMC member's account in the gift amount of your choice. Gifts must be paid in full with cash, check or credit card.

We'll also provide you with a special holiday greeting card to notify the recipient of your gift.

Call 252.943.3046 for details or visit any Tideland office.



Contract crews with Lee Electrical work to restore power to members in the Yeatesville area of Beaufort County. Photo by Darren Bauer



Replacement of a damaged joint-use pole necessitated a planned outage for 112 members east of the Y on River Road in Washington the night of September 23. Photo by Michael Marslender

The first time Tideland activated its emergency response plan this year was on Aug. 30 as the remnants of Hurricane Idalia moved northward. Fortunately, the system had lost most of its steam with fewer than 400 Tideland members experiencing a power outage.

Less than a month later, we once again pre-staged tree trimmers and contract construction crews at nearby hotels to await the arrival of Tropical Storm Ophelia.

On the morning of Sept. 23 at 6 am, Ophelia officially made landfall at Emerald Isle. Tideland line crews and construction contract workers had already arrived at their assigned districts in anticipation of power outages in the eastern most parts of the co-op's territory.

At 7 a.m., fewer than 100 Tideland members had lost power, but by 10 a.m., we reached a system outage peak impacting 7,425 members. When all was said and done, a total of 8,228 members experienced an Ophelia-related outage.

# ard takes on Ophelia

Tree removal was our greatest challenge in the aftermath, along with wire replacement. The co-op only suffered two broken poles, eight broken cross arms and four damaged transformers.

Amazingly, only one member at Ocracoke lost power during the event. Even mainland Dare County was left

remarkably unscathed with a total 22 members losing power.

Instead, Ophelia took a more direct aim at locations along the Pungo and Pamlico Rivers and the western shoreline of the Pamlico Sound. As sound water receded from Ocracoke and Hatteras Island, it came barreling into Oriental, Pamlico Beach, Belhaven and Washington.

At 3 p.m. that day, Washington was at 3 feet above flood stage. Belhaven peaked at 1.7 feet above flood stage. It's a timely reminder to co-op members that all severe weather alerts, including tropical storms and noreasters, be taken seriously.

Fortunately, Ophelia made a beeline through Tideland territory, which allowed our crews to emerge in full force with plenty of daylight left for power restoration activities.

By day's end, power had been restored to all but a few agricultural accounts in mainland Hyde County in areas deemed too wet for overnight work. Crews returned the morning of Sept. 24 to complete those repairs.



Phoenix Farms Vineyard in Edward posted this celebratory photo as Tideland crews arrived to begin power restoration activities following Tropical Storm Ophelia.



## Night light

### OUTDOOR LIGHTING

All new Tideland EMC yard lights are dark sky friendly LED fixtures that aim light where you need it (on the ground) and not into the windows of neighboring homes.

**48 Watt "Caretaker"**  
**\$10.06**

**54 Watt "Cobra"**  
**\$10.06**

**106 Watt "GE Evolve"**  
**(400-watt equivalent)**  
**\$14.10**

Monthly price assumes the light can be attached to an existing electric utility pole. Tideland EMC is responsible for the energy used by the light and normal maintenance. If the outdoor light cannot be attached to an existing pole, a pole charge of \$2.10 per pole per month will be added to the monthly bill. An additional one time installation fee may apply for underground service. Interested? Give us a call at 252.943.3046.

# See something. Say something.

## Padmount transformers take a dip from Ophelia's surprise storm surge



Kayaking through Washington's Pamlico Plantation. Photo by Jenny Sargent Parham

If you ever needed a reminder that it's never "just a tropical storm," one was delivered by September's Tropical Storm Ophelia. Residents

in Oriental, Belhaven and Washington were inundated with an unanticipated storm surge that came in almost as quickly as it departed.



Dowry Creek in Belhaven  
Photo by Heather Jernigan Morrone

In Pamlico Plantation, padmount transformer cabinets were entirely submerged without a loss of power to members.

In some cases, the storm surge was significant enough to move transformer cabinets, which alert members subsequently reported to the co-op for immediate repairs.

Even when there is not a storm, transformer cabinets can be damaged by mowing equipment. Recently, a lighting arrestor that



A transformer cabinet that floated out of position in Oriental.  
Photo by Edward Abrams



When a padmount lightning arrester operated at Camp Caroline, it became lodged between the cabinet and pad.  
Photo by Ryan Weston

operated inside a transformer cabinet and prevented a power outage, had enough force to pop the cabinet open before becoming wedged between the cabinet and the pad. So it's important to report any cabinet disturbance to the co-op.

Tideland EMC urges you to:

- Recognize that these boxes contain electrical equipment.
- Respect the equipment and the boxes—do not open, tamper with, or obstruct access to them.
- If there is any damage, such as a hole or broken lock, immediately report it to your utility.

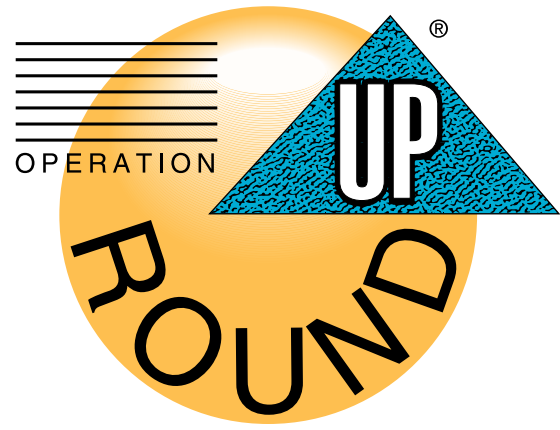
Familiarize yourself and family members with any electrical boxes on your property.

Padmount transformers often require larger enclosures. The transformer reduces the voltage of incoming electricity to a lower voltage for household use. While some homeowners consider padmount transformers an eyesore, it is important to not obstruct access to them.



Never obstruct a padmount transformer with vegetation, decorative items or fencing. Remind children that these are energized pieces of utility equipment and are not appropriate for sitting on or using as a base for a game of tag.

Do not bury, install fences around, or plant immediately around electrical boxes in an effort to disguise them. These barriers may make the cabinet difficult to find and block access, should routine maintenance need done or an emergency occur. We recommend a minimum clearance of at least 10 feet to the front of the transformer cabinet and 2 to 5 feet to the rear and each side.



## Do Unto Others

For more than 30 years, Tideland members have self-funded Operation Roundup, which provides energy assistance grants to members in need. Donations are voluntary and can be provided any number of ways:

- Members can opt to have their monthly electric bill rounded up to the next whole dollar amount (Example: actual bill of \$98.45 is rounded up to \$99.00)
- Members can ask that a specific dollar amount be added to their monthly bill. We refer to this as Operation RoundUp Plus.
- Members make a one-time donation payable to "Tideland Electric Care Trust"

We are committed to being good stewards of member donated funds. Here is a look at our two most recent years of assistance to individual members:

### Average Grant Amount

2022: \$79.15  
2021: \$85.09

### Average Number of Grants Provided

2022: 26 per month  
2021: 31 per month

To become an Operation RoundUp contributor, check the sign-up box on the return stub of your electric bill when making your electric bill when making payment, call us at 252.943.3046, or enroll via the member portal.

Real People.  
Real Power.

# firing up one **PORTABLE GENERATOR** is like starting **HUNDREDS OF CARS**



According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), one fuel-powered portable generator produces as much carbon monoxide (CO) as hundreds of combustion-engine cars.

Using a portable generator in your home, garage or too close to your home is like starting a parking lot full of cars and letting the CO poison seep into your home. And the devastating result is almost immediate: The CO from one generator can kill in minutes.

## USING A PORTABLE GENERATOR SAFELY

1. Always use a generator at least 20 feet away from your home.
2. Never operate one inside a home, on a porch or near windows and doors.
3. The 20-foot rule also applies to other locations, such as a shed, cabin, camper or trailer.
4. When shopping for a generator, look for one that produces reduced emissions.
5. Also look for one that shuts off automatically when high levels of CO are present.
6. Keep your generator well-maintained and follow all manufacturer's instructions.
7. Ensure CO detectors are installed on every level of your home and near or in bedrooms.
8. Test CO alarms monthly; also track their age. They need to be replaced every seven years.

Source: CPSC

Learn more at:



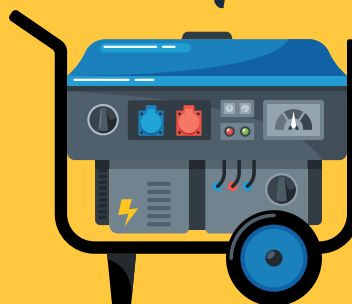
## TOP 3 REASONS for using a generator

1. Weather-related power outages.
2. Power shutoffs.
3. Temporary locations.

## CO deaths associated with PORTABLE GENERATORS

Approximately **85** individuals die in the U.S. each year.

**81%** of deaths occur in residential locations.



## Tideland Topics

[www.tidelandemc.com](http://www.tidelandemc.com)

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### Member Service

252.943.3046

800.637.1079

### 24 Hour Outage Reporting & Automated Services

252.944.2400

800.882.1001

Tideland EMC is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender

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## 5 ways to save

Continued from Page B

### 3. Use window coverings wisely

Open blinds, drapes or other window coverings during the day to allow natural sunlight in to warm your home. Close them at night. If you feel cold air around windows, consider purchasing a plastic storm window kit that shrinks to form a remarkably airtight seal once you heat the surface up with a hair dryer. You can insulate 5 windows for about \$10. Our energy auditors love these kits!

### 4. Limit space heater use

They may be cheap to purchase, but the cost of using electric space heaters for prolonged periods can be shockingly high. They can also damage household wiring which increases fire risks. The only way a space heater can provide savings is by boosting the temperature of a small space for a short period of time so you can avoid raising the thermostat of your central HVAC system. So utilizing one in your bathroom for a brief period of time in the morning makes sense. But please use it safely.

### 5. Enroll in high energy use alerts

Home equipment can fail at any time, but it may not present itself outwardly until you receive a high electric bill. High use alerts are your first line of defense.

To enroll in our high energy use alert program log into your account online or call us at 252.943.3046. Remember to set a PER DAY amount not a monthly figure. \$7.00 is a good starting point for most members.