

# Tideland Topics

*Real People. Real Power.*

## Nearing the *finished line*

At press time, Tideland's \$3.5 million cabling project on the south end of Hatteras Island was nearing completion. Final splicing was tentatively scheduled to begin March 16. Once complete, crews will dismantle the overhead line (photo above) that has increasingly been impacted by rapid erosion and encroaching seas.

*Jim Chrisman photos*



## Galloping *walloping*

February packed a punch this year with two blustery weather events just two weeks apart. Learn more about the unusual phenomenon known as galloping lines and how it proved to be particularly destructive the morning of February 21. Plus, a harrowing reminder about avoiding road travel when hazardous conditions exist.

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Crews make repairs on Swamp Road in Pantego on February 21

*Paul Spruill photo*





## April *maintenance*

Tideland has hired Lucas Tree Experts to trim trees in our right-of-way. In April they will continue to work in the Pamlico County communities of Arapahoe, Oriental and Merritt.

Osmose crews be conducting pole inspections on the Dowry Creek circuit before heading south to Fairfield Harbour, Arapahoe and Merritt.

When planting trees be mindful of our utility right-of-way. Consider the mature growth of the species you select and plant at a sufficient distance from power lines so it will not impact electric service in the decades to come.

Call 8-1-1 before starting any construction and/or excavation project to have all utility lines marked.



**Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.**

# Remembering *Robbie Rouse*

Tideland lost a cherished member of our co-op family on Saturday, February 29, with the sudden and unexpected passing of 36-year employee Robbie Rouse.

Robbie joined Tideland in January 1984 as an apprentice lineman in our Pantego district. While he transitioned to the position of purchasing agent early in his career, Robbie continued to renew his climbing certification for many successive years so he could fully participate in power restoration activities when needed. That was what set Robbie apart: his selfless dedication to serving others in whatever capacity he could while never relishing the spotlight.

Nevertheless, he was publicly recognized early on when he was named Belhaven's Citizen of the Year in April 1992. He was just 31 years old and had already distinguished himself as a pillar of the community. At the time, he was captain of the Pantego Volunteer Fire Department. He had played an instrumental role in revitalizing the Pantego Ruritan Club and had served as the organization's president. A member of the First Christian Church in Belhaven, he had also contributed to the growth and development of the church's youth group. The admiration and



*Robbie Rouse*  
March 25, 1961 - February 29, 2020

affection bestowed upon Robbie was evident even then based on the number of thoughtful letters submitted to the Chamber of Commerce's nominating committee by young people with whom Robbie interacted. And yet he was himself a young father then to sons Christopher and Gregory who were ages 10 and 9, respectively. When Sammie Gaylord, Belhaven's 1990 Citizen of the Year, presented the award it was obvious that Robbie was touched yet also a bit embarrassed to be singled out for what honestly came so naturally to him.

On July 20, 1997, Robbie married the love of his life, Jane Leigh. Soon he embarked on a second season of fatherhood as the

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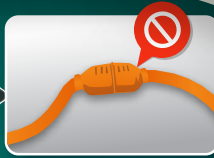


# REACHING TO SAFETY:

## Use Extension Cords Properly

Roughly **3,300 home fires** originate in extension cords each year, **killing 50 people and injuring 270 more**. Extension cords can overheat and cause fires when used improperly, so keep these important tips in mind to **protect your home and workplace**.

**DON'T** attempt to **plug extension cords into one another**.



Make sure extension cords are **properly rated** for their intended use, indoor or outdoor, and **meet or exceed the power needs** of the appliance or device being used.



Keep all **outdoor extension cords** clear of snow and standing water.



Do **NOT** overload extension cords.



A heavy reliance on **extension cords** is an indication that you have too few outlets to address your needs. Have **additional outlets installed** where you need them.



Inspect cords for **DAMAGE** before use. Check for **cracked or frayed sockets**, loose or bare wires, and loose connections.



Do **NOT** **nail or staple electrical cords** to walls or baseboards.



Do **NOT** run through **walls, doorways, ceilings or floors**. If cord is covered, heat cannot escape, which may result in a **FIRE HAZARD**.



**NEVER** use **three-prong plugs** with outlets that only have two slots. **Never cut off the ground pin to force a fit**, which could lead to electric shock.



Buy only cords that have been **approved** by an **independent testing laboratory**.



Do **NOT** substitute **extension cords** for permanent wiring.



**DO NOT** use an **extension cord** or a **power strip** with **heaters or fans**, which could cause cords to **overheat and result in a fire**.

# Ice, Wind & Galloping Lines



Lee Electric contract crews replace broken poles on Shirley Farm Road in Pinetown. *Paul Spruill photo*

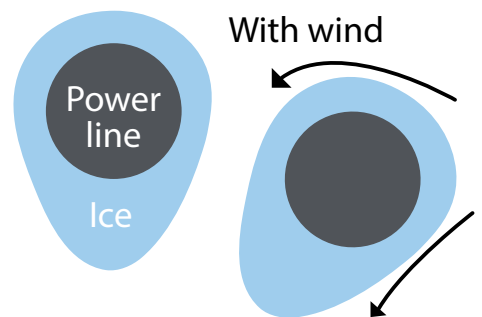


Galloping lines brought down ten poles on this stretch of Old Hwy 97. *Paul Spruill photo*

Storms don't have to be named to inflict serious damage to our electric system. Fortunately, we did have some advance warning to prepare for events that impacted Tideland territory February 6-7 and February 20-21. The first event resulted from a line of thunderstorms that produced wind gusts between 45 and 65 miles per hour. More than 9,600 Tideland members experienced power outages due to distribution system damages. The lengthiest outage occurred on Fairfield Harbour Circuit #2 where a double-circuit pole broke, the force of which uprooted an underground line that also had to be repaired.

Two weeks later on the night of February 20, light snow and ice blanketed much of Tideland territory. As the sun rose, the Pinetown area was impacted by straight line winds.

When ice accumulates on power lines, it forms a teardrop shape. Straight line winds can cause the ice encased wire to take on the shape of an aerodynamic airplane wing resulting in lift. This is known as "galloping." Galloping can cause

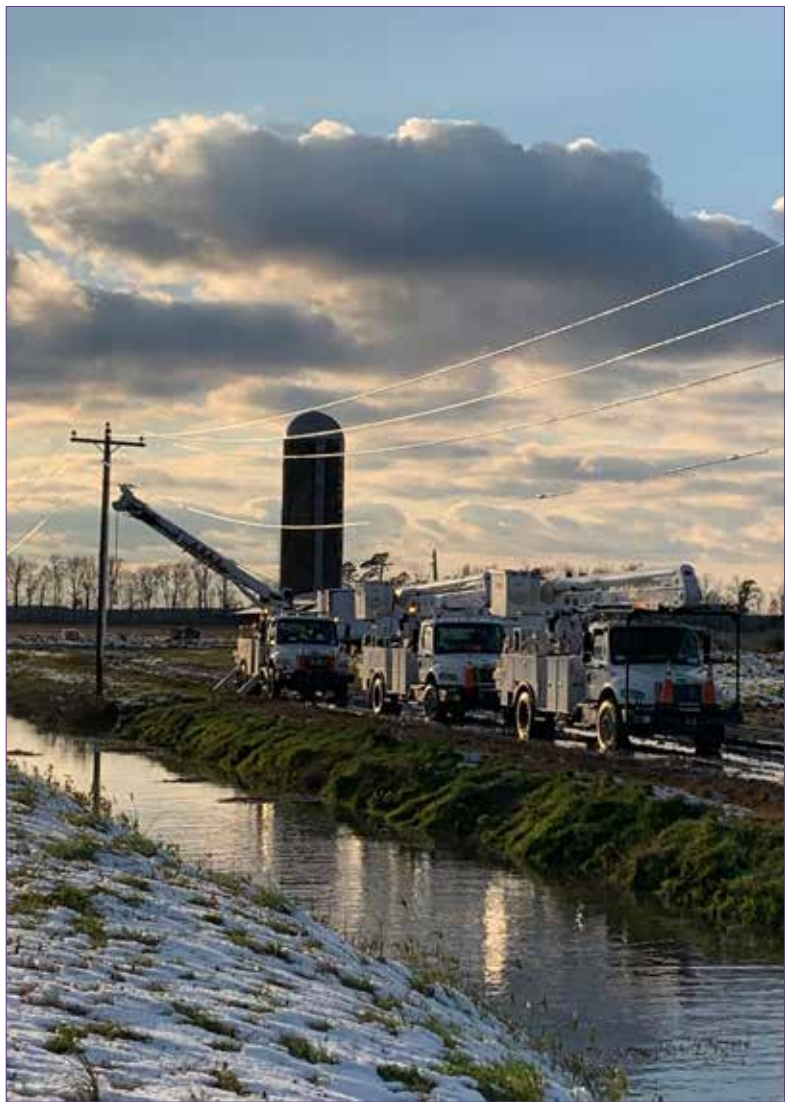


wires to eventually touch, resulting in a fault or subsequent power outage. The increased movement can also cause cross-arms to break, bringing lines to the ground.

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Contract crews assisted Tideland with wind storm repairs in Fairfield Harbour on February 7. *Darren Bauer photo*



Members in Terra Ceia endured a lengthy outage as crews struggled to set new poles in wet, windy conditions. *Paul Spruill photo*



Lineman Josh Dunbar uses a wire pulley to de-ice a line. *Paul Spruill photo*



While responding to a February 7 outage, Grantsboro line superintendent Steven Harris saw a falling tree hit this passing vehicle. Fortunately, no one was injured. *Steven Harris photo*



Linemen Jacob Hardison and Robert Shively replace broken crossarms on Free Union Church Road. *Paul Spruill photo*



For every half-inch of ice on a distribution line, the result is one foot of sag.



Distribution system damage at Fairfield Harbour on February 7. *Timothy Ipock photo*



February 7 repairs on Ephesus Church Road in Blounts Creek. *Wayne Brackin photo*

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It was this galloping phenomenon that dominoed out of control early February 21, damaging 15 poles, 10 of which were in a clearing along on Old Hwy. 97. While 1,700 members were impacted by the wintry outages, crews were able to re-route several lines to allow for power restoration while repairs continued. Unfortunately, a handful of members in the Shirley Farm area experienced the longest outage as crews battled high winds much of the day as they attempted to reset multiple downed poles.

Damage elsewhere was limited. South of the Pamlico River, an auto accident resulted in a broken pole on Cotton Patch Road in Chocowinity.

We appreciate our crews and the long hours they put in to restore power as well as the patience and support of our member-owners.

# Message to members

## WPCA credit debuts with new rate implementation

by **PAUL SPRUILL**  
GENERAL MANAGER &  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

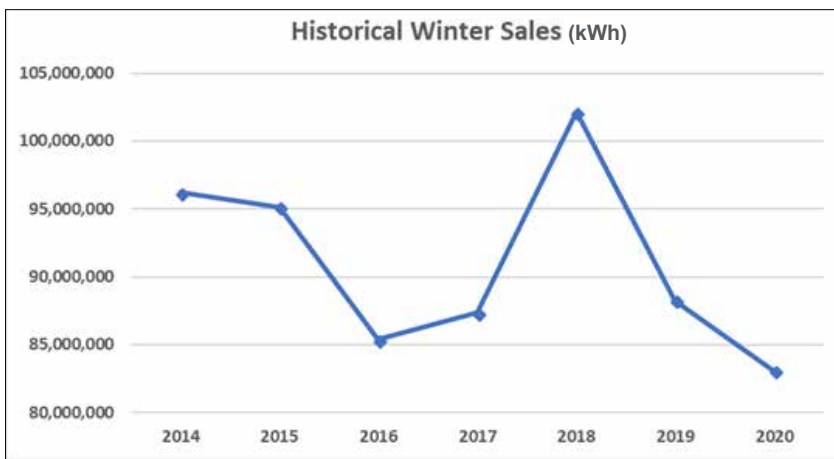
In our January 2020 newsletter, new rate schedules were published with an implementation date of March 1. The accompanying manager's message noted that the wholesale power cost adjustment (WPCA) charge of \$7.00 per 1,000 kilowatt hours (kWh) would be zeroed out when the new rates took effect.

Fortunately, we were able to over deliver on that front by implementing a WPCA credit in March of \$1.79 per 1,000 kWh. Our original rate change projection, with no WPCA, was a 3.338% increase for 1,000 kWh billed in March compared to January 2020 rate calculations. With the WPCA credit in play, the billed residential rate increase came in at 2.039%. We anticipate a continuation of the WPCA credit for the foreseeable future.

Billed comparison for 1,000 kWh, Residential Rate 1		
January 2020 \$137.80 <i>*WPCA charge of .007¢/kWh</i>	March 2020 \$140.61 <i>*WPCA credit of .00179¢/kWh</i>	Net 2.039% increase

\*calculations do not include NC REPS and 7% NC Sales Tax

Members also benefited from much milder temperatures this winter. In fact, Tideland's combined energy sales for January and February 2020 were the lowest they have been since the same time period in 2014. The most comparable winter season in recent years was 2016 with 3% more in energy sales. This makes the WPCA credit implemented in March even more remarkable.



Winter residential rates remain in place through April 30.



## time-of-use reminder

Tidelanders participating in the co-op's time-of-use rate program are reminded that the on-peak hours change on Thursday, April 16. The summer on-peak hours will be from 4 pm to 8 pm, Monday through Friday.

All program kWh will continue to be billed at a rate of 8.61¢ and the summer on-peak kW demand charge moves to \$11.01 starting May 1.

As we noted in the February newsletter, a billing software delay means the time-of-use rate changes proposed for implementation on March 1 have been postponed.

We hope to have an update on the software changes in the next two months.

The restructured rate, which will include super off-peak pricing, was designed with electric vehicle owners in mind to promote overnight charging. Members who have been adopting smart home technologies may also exponentially benefit from super off-peak pricing depending on which loads they are able to shift to late night and early morning cycling.

To learn more about time-of-use rates visit the residential billing section of our website.



Robbie in April 1992

# Remembering Robbie

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ultimate “girl dad” to daughters MacKenzie and Lauren. He continued to serve his community with distinction and was an integral part of Beaufort County’s Relay for Life during the events’ most successful years. He was a quiet problem solver and a compassionate friend. Robbie didn’t hide his lifelong admiration and affection for Richard Noble, Tideland’s retired engineer. Robbie was loyal and loving and

couldn’t have been more proud of his wife, children and grandchildren. He was their hero.

Robbie’s commitment to the co-op never wavered and while he most recently served as Tideland’s director of warehousing, inventory and operations support, he was still on the front lines February 21, helping restore power following the ice and snow event. Many members knew Robbie personally but even those who didn’t directly benefited from his tireless service. Please keep his family in your thoughts and prayers during this season of remembrance.



MacKenzie, Jane Leigh, Lauren and Robbie at Radio City Music Hall in 2019

*Real People.  
Real Power.*

## Tideland Topics

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

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Tideland EMC is an equal opportunity provider & employer



## holiday closing

Our offices will be closed Friday, April 10, in observance of Good Friday. Our 24-hour member service center will remain open and crews are on standby to respond to outages as needed.

