



MARCH ■ 2008



Our offices  
will be  
closed on  
Friday,  
March 21

# REAL PEOPLE. REAL POWER. Tideland Topics

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE MEMBER-OWNERS OF TIDELAND ELECTRIC MEMBERSHIP CORPORATION

## AS PREDICTED: Bills reflect declining power cost factor

### WPCA CONTINUES DOWNWARD TREND

August 2007  
1.428¢/kWh

September 2007  
1.380¢/kWh

October 2007  
1.306¢/kWh

November 2007  
1.200¢/kWh

December 2007  
1.129¢/kWh

January 2008  
1.103¢/kWh

February 2008  
1.017¢/kWh

In January, when Tideland published new rate schedules, we told you we anticipated a decrease in the per kilowatt hour (kWh) wholesale power cost adjustment (WPCA). In 2007, the average WPCA was 1.2¢ kWh, reaching a high of 1.428¢ last August. Since then the WPCA has steadily declined and for bills rendered during the month of February 2008 the WPCA was 25 percent lower than August 2007.

We still believe the WPCA will drop to 0.8¢ in 2008. The WPCA is determined by power generating expenses which are influenced by numerous factors. For example, drought conditions could limit our allocation of inexpensive hydropower from the Southeastern Power Administration. World events and power plant maintenance issues also determine the price for power. Therefore, we encourage you to continue to look for ways to become more energy efficient at home and work.

### REAL LEARNING:



## Plugging into rural life

Northside High School in Beaufort County has taken education to the great outdoors. Through a series of schoolwide projects teachers hope to reintroduce students to nature and their local

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26

## P.I.R.L.

CONTINUED FROM  
PAGE 25

surroundings. The project has been dubbed P.I.R.L.: Plugging into Rural Life.

Students are cultivating garden plots, raising rabbits in the courtyard, raising tilapia in tanks, and with a Tideland EMC Bright Ideas grant they will construct a cabin while studying naturalist Henry David Thoreau. The school recently hosted a concert appropriately dubbed "P.I.R.L. Jam" to highlight their efforts.

Citing what they call a nature deficit disorder among today's youth, Northside educators say the cure is an easy one. Go explore the great outdoors. Unplug your video games and computers and plug into rural life!

## From our Chief Executive Officer: White House budget battle



*William H. Stacy*

### **A proven program that reduces energy costs for the poor is targeted for elimination by the White House.**

It's hard to believe that with rising energy prices and calls for increasing energy dependence the president would seek to cut funding for programs designed to reduce energy consumption.

The total Fiscal Year 2009 request for the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy at the Department of Energy (DOE) is \$1.255 billion, a 27% cut from the FY 2008 level of \$1.722 billion.

The largest program cut slashes low-income weatherization funds, which are proposed to be zeroed out. The agency itself credits the

weatherization program with producing significant savings for millions of poor households.

"The Weatherization Assistance Program enables low-income families to permanently reduce their energy bills by making their homes more energy efficient. During the last 30 years, the U.S. Department of Energy's Weatherization Assistance Program has provided weatherization services to more than 5.5 million low-income families.

"By reducing the energy bills of low-income families instead of offering aid, weatherization reduces dependency and liberates these funds for spending on more pressing family issues. On average, weatherization reduces

heating bills by 31% and overall energy bills by \$358 per year at current prices." (Source: <http://www.eere.energy.gov/weatherization>)

"With the economic pain lower-income families are feeling, this cut is neither compassionate nor good economic policy," says Steven Nadel, executive director of the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy (ACEEE).

"This budget is running on empty when it comes to investing in efficiency as the first fuel in the race for energy security," adds ACEEE's Policy Director Bill Prindle. "Reining in

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28

## Installing a generator? Do it safely

Backup generators can seem like a real lifeline when the power goes out. However, an improperly-installed generator could pose a real hazard for the owner-operator, utility crews and the general public.

The National Electric Safety Code requires installation of a double-throw, double-pole transfer switch whenever a generator is connected to household wiring.

Without a properly-installed transfer switch

the electricity you generate could backfeed onto Tideland's electric system and reenergize downed power lines putting linemen, tree removal crews and innocent bystanders at risk. Furthermore, you run the risk of damaging your home's internal wiring and causing a fire.

For more information call Tideland at 1-800-637-1079 to request a free generator safety guide.



## REAL SAFETY: TEST YOUR HOME'S GFCIs

A ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) is a device designed to minimize shock and reduce the chances of electrocution, especially when electrical circuits within appliances come in contact with water.

Most homes built since the 1970s have a GFCI in their kitchen and bathroom. Outdoor outlets also should have GFCIs. Most GFCIs look like standard wall outlets but are equipped with “test” and “reset” buttons. An improperly installed or non-functioning GFCI offers no protection against accidental shock. Therefore, the built-in test buttons should be routinely checked.

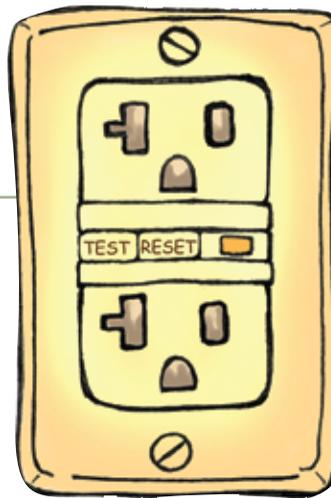


Photo by Kim Fennema

To test a GFCI:

- 1: Push the “Reset” button of the GFCI receptacle.
- 2: Plug in the night light and turn it on. The light should be on.
- 3: Push the “Test” button. Light should turn off.
- 4: Push the “Reset” button again. Light should turn on.

If the light remains on when the “Test” button is pushed, a qualified electrician should inspect and if necessary, replace the GFCI.

## 5 WAYS TO SAVE ENERGY IN THE KITCHEN

1. **COVER POTS WHILE COOKING TO PREVENT HEAT LOSS**
2. **IF YOU USE YOUR OVEN'S SELF-CLEANING FEATURE START THE CYCLE RIGHT AFTER COOKING WHILE THE OVEN IS STILL HOT**
3. **USE ENERGY SAVING SETTINGS ON REFRIGERATORS AND DISHWASHERS**
4. **MINIMIZE FATS AND LIQUIDS TO REDUCE COOK TIME**
5. **USE YOUR OVEN LIGHT TO CHECK ON FOODS RATHER THAN OPENING THE OVEN DOOR**

## CLOSING ROOM REGISTERS COULD COST YOU

Closing forced-air registers could leave you paying even more for heating and cooling. Closing registers in an attempt to direct more heat into one part of your house results in duct system losses which means conditioned air is being lost to the crawlspace or attic. The closer the closed register is to the air handler the more severe the losses become. The stress on the HVAC system can result in equipment damage.

If you need more conditioned air diverted to one part of your home have a qualified HVAC technician reconfigure your duct work.



## REAL PEOPLE, GREAT EMPLOYEES: HEATHER GARRISH ENGINEERING SECRETARY

3 YEARS OF SERVICE



While she'd love to be at home full time with daughter Brandi, age 5, and son Austin, 19 months, Heather Garrish feels quite at home in Tideland EMC's engineering department.

"It really is like one big happy family and everyone gets along so well," says Heather who works with the cooperative's contractors on a daily basis. If you call the cooperative about a load management switch or surge protector chances are you will talk to Heather who sets installation and repair appointments. She also compiles the cooperative's outage reports and serves as back-up when it comes to troubleshooting the network server and phone system. Like many Tideland employees the part of her job description that reads "miscellaneous duties as assigned" often dictates the pace of the work week.

Heather has lived in Beaufort County all her life and graduated from Pungo Christian Academy in '94. She holds a degree in Business Administration and Accounting from East Carolina University. Before joining Tideland, Heather worked at NACCO in Pitt County and admits she doesn't miss the daily commute.

In her free time Heather enjoys helping with her daughter's T-ball team and loves to hit the beach whenever possible. She volunteers annually for Tideland's Relay for Life team and the co-op's Christmas toy drive.

She and husband Ron reside in Belhaven. Heather is the daughter of Wade and Trudy Hubers and the late Mike Cutler.

REAL PEOPLE.  
REAL POWER.

## Tideland Topics

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

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ray Hamilton, President  
J. Douglas Brinson, Vice President  
Garry Jordan, Secretary  
Ed Duetsch, Treasurer  
Leon Bryant, Jimmy Burbage,  
Mark Carawan, Vincent O'Neal,  
Clifton Paul, Paul Sasnett,  
Wayne Sawyer & Cecil Smith, Sr.

### CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

William H. Stacy, PE

### EDITOR

Heidi Jernigan Smith

24-Hour Customer Service  
252.943.3046  
800.637.1079

Outage Reporting &  
Automated Services  
252.944.2400  
800.882.1001

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE?  
TAKE THE 6 DEGREE ENERGY EFFICIENCY CHALLENGE.  
VISIT [WWW.6DEGREECHALLENGE.COM](http://WWW.6DEGREECHALLENGE.COM)

## BUDGET BATTLE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 26

our energy use should be DOE's first priority, but this budget does not reflect that."

The president's budget also recommends deep cuts to the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Many of Tideland's poorest members are directly helped by this program during the hottest and coldest months of the year.

Tideland, along with our state and national trade associations, will lobby elected officials for their continued support of these programs that have long and successful track records and are increasingly important to our energy future.

**Tune Into  
Doug Rye's  
Home Remedies  
Every Sunday  
Morning at 8**

