

SEPTEMBER ■ 2008



REAL PEOPLE. REAL POWER.

Tideland Topics

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

TAX HOLIDAY: NC Legislature supports Energy Star savings

The North Carolina legislature has created a sales tax holiday for certain Energy Star goods. The sales tax holiday will apply to purchases made November 7-9.

The list of items approved for the sales tax holiday includes all Energy Star rated clothes washers, freezers, refrigerators, air conditioners, heat pumps, ceiling fans, dehumidifiers, and programmable thermostats.

To promote the sales tax holiday and energy efficient purchases Tideland EMC will offer its members additional

rebates on qualifying items purchased from Tideland Appliance. The store's showroom is located on Hwy. 70 in New Bern. The rebates will be offered in addition to the everyday Tideland member discount of 3 percent.

Member rebate details will be published in the October issue of Tideland Topics.

Tideland EMC also offers credit worthy members 5 percent financing for energy efficient improvements. For details about the loan program call Karen Heffley at 800.637.1079, ext. 1141.



REAL HEROES:



A Labor Day Salute to Our Linemen

Tideland is fortunate to have some of the best trained linemen who go the extra mile everyday to ensure the safe and reliable delivery of electric service to more than 22,000 accounts in six counties. This month we salute them for the real heroes they are.

Jay Abramson
Larry Arthur
Justin Boor

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LABOR OF LOVE
FROM PAGE 21

Bob Collins
Brad Cox
Kane Cox
Matthew DeVan
Edward Everett
Adam Fyle
Joseph Gibbs
Rodney Gibbs
Fred Hackney
Jacob Hardison
Steven Jennings
John Marsh
Michael Marslender
Donald McArthur
Andy Midyette
Al Mullens
Willie Murray
Matthew Neal
Bobby O'Neal
Joseph Pugh
Christopher Rice
William Rowe
Harry Slade
Joe Smith
Randy Stilley
Vincent Whitfield
Raymond Wilson

Our thanks for a job well done!

Message to Our Member-Owners: Better service through technology

With energy costs rising it makes more sense than ever to improve your home's efficiency. Likewise it makes sense for the cooperative to invest in new technologies that increase our own efficiency and improve service to our members.

One such area that we will soon be investing in is automated meter reading (AMR). With rising fuel and labor expenses the economies of scale now exist to justify system wide implementation of AMR. Our engineering department is currently laying the groundwork that will allow us to introduce this technology.

While the initial costs are considerable the cooperative will recoup those expenses within a few years with the elimination of meter reading services including

numerous fleet vehicles. We will also have the ability to disconnect service remotely when homes are vacated or when electric bills go unpaid further reducing transportation expenses.

AMR will also allow us to isolate kilowatt hour usage information for a particular location which will allow customer service representatives to help troubleshoot high bill concerns. AMR eliminates misreads and delayed readings due to inclement weather conditions. It will also go a long way towards preventing power theft.

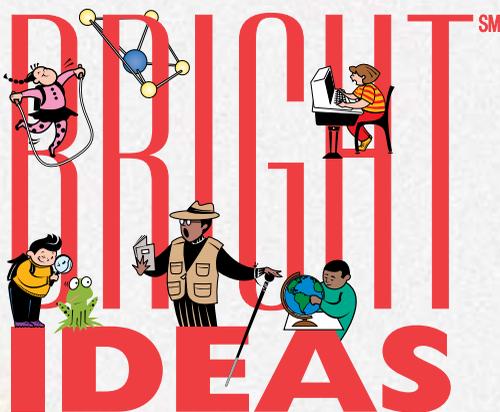
As our human resources officer Myra Beasley explained last month the cooperative will face a significant exodus of experienced employees with 33% of our workforce eligible for retirement in the next 10 years. We will increasingly look to



Vernon Howell, Jr.
Customer Service Manager

technology to delegate certain tasks in our day to day business operations. That in turn will require remaining and future employees to be increasingly proficient in administering the tools of technology. We will accomplish that through a combination of in-house training and specialized hiring.

Your cooperative never employs technology for technology's sake. The result of any new investment or upgrade must be increased reliability, affordable rates and the delivery of customer service that meets your needs.



Teachers have until September 26 to apply

Local classroom teachers may request up to \$2,000 in funding for innovative teaching programs and projects through the latest round of Bright Ideas funding. For more information or to apply online visit: www.ncbrightideas.com or call Heidi Jernigan Smith at 252.944.2410.

REAL CHALLENGES:

UNDERGROUND LINES SUBJECT TO INTERESTING ANIMAL OUTAGES

Delivering reliable electric service in Tideland territory is not without its challenges. Some of our most interesting challenges occur when animal habitat comes in conflict with utility infrastructure.

SQUIRRELS

On Monday, August 4, residents in the China Grove area of Pamlico County lost power when a squirrel chewed through the insulation of a power line and made contact with the energized wire. The power line was in conduit and once crews located the source of the outage they had to cut the conduit away to make repairs. The

and a tree branch. The outage occurred in the morning hours when squirrels are known to be most active.

FIRE ANTS

Sometimes the smallest creatures can cause the biggest utility headaches. Fire ants are notorious nesters and the inside of a pad mount transformer provides ideal ant habitat. Pad mount



Underground wire showing signs of squirrel damage.

transformers are the green utility cabinets found in areas served by underground power lines.

A study conducted by Texas A&M University cited fire ants as the cause of 80 percent of all pad mount transformer failures. With each cabinet costing \$2,000 to \$3,000 such small insects can create large repair bills.

squirrel appeared to have nested inside the conduit which offered ideal protection from predators.

Squirrels chew to sharpen their teeth but are unable to differentiate between a power line

ANIMAL OUTAGE FACTS

1.

TIDELAND EXPERIENCED 92 ANIMAL RELATED OUTAGES IN 2007

2.

AS OF AUGUST 11, TIDELAND HAD EXPERIENCED 53 ANIMAL RELATED OUTAGES IN 2008 AFFECTING FEWER THAN 900 MEMBERS

3.

NATIONWIDE, SNAKES CAUSE MORE SUBSTATION OUTAGES THAN ANY OTHER ANIMAL EXCEPT FOR BIRDS

4.

LARGE ANIMALS, SUCH AS BEARS, WILL USE UTILITY POLES AS SCRATCHING POSTS

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?

Tideland's energy auditors continue to find problems that contribute to high bills and wasted energy. The shame of it is most problems would be relatively easy and inexpensive to fix. Can you really afford NOT to repair problems that drive up energy costs? In this photo you can see that the crawlspace insulation was installed upside down. Also the duct tape on the water pipe insulation has lost all of its adhesiveness. That's why we recommend the use of mastic to join and seal all central heat and air connections for a permanent, impenetrable seal.



FUEL ADJUSTMENT DECLINE NEARING END

Tideland's wholesale power cost adjustment (WPCA) continued a year long decline, dipping to .802¢ per kilowatt hour in August 2008. The billed fuel adjustment factor had not been that low since January 2005 and helped bring some relief during the hot summer season.

However, Tideland's wholesale power supplier, North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation, has indicated that higher fuel costs are on the horizon and the wholesale power cost adjustment (WPCA) will begin to trend back up.

The cooperatives have benefited from the stability of certain long term contracts that are set to expire. When those power purchases are renegotiated it is expected that rates will reflect rising costs in the energy markets. Fortunately, NCEMC recently increased its share of ownership in the Catawba nuclear facility to shore up rate stability for cooperative members statewide.

WPCA DOWNWARD TREND SINCE 2007

August 2007 1.426¢/kWh	March 2008 .964¢/kWh
September 2007 1.380¢/kWh	April 2008 .92¢/kWh
October 2007 1.306¢/kWh	May 2008 .899¢/kWh
November 2007 1.200¢/kWh	June 2008 .909¢/kWh
December 2007 1.129¢/kWh	July 2008 .876¢/kWh
January 2008 1.103¢/kWh	August 2008 .802¢/kWh
February 2008 1.017¢/kWh	

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VISIT WWW.ourenergy.coop TO LEARN WHAT IMPORTANT QUESTIONS WE'RE ASKING ELECTED OFFICIALS IN AN EFFORT TO KEEP ELECTRIC RATES AFFORDABLE

There's still time to enter our "Change a Light" contest

Would you change one light bulb if it meant saving up to \$30 per year? That's the potential of installing just one ENERGY STAR bulb in a high use fixture. Tideland EMC is sweetening the pot with an additional incentive. Simply mail in your receipt showing a compact fluorescent bulb purchase since May 25, 2008, and you're entered in our drawing for a \$300 credit on your electric bill. Remember to write your name, account number and daytime phone number on the receipt and mail it to Tideland EMC, PO Box 159, Pantego, NC 27860. The deadline to enter is October 10, 2008.

If every homeowner changed just one bulb to an ENERGY STAR-rated bulb, the U.S. would save enough energy to light 7 million homes and prevent greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to that of 8 million cars.

