

# Tideland Topics

REAL PEOPLE. REAL POWER.



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

## \$1,250 REBATE: Energy Star perks for manufactured housing purchases

Purchase a new Energy Star Manufactured Home during 2017 and you could qualify for a one-time electric bill credit of \$1,250. A copy of the home's Energy Star certificate and the dealer's sales invoice MUST accompany the rebate application which can be found online at [www.tidelandemc.com](http://www.tidelandemc.com).

Every Energy Star certified manufactured home receives a blue Energy Star label that is usually on the home's electrical panel or

next to its HUD data plate. Buyers, please make sure your sales contract with the manufactured housing dealer clearly states that they will be delivering and installing an Energy Star certified home.

Prior to ordering your new home, it's recommended that you contact Tideland's energy efficiency program manager Heidi Smith at 252.944.2410 to ensure program guidelines are met to qualify for the rebate.



## Looking for college scholarships?

Tideland Electric awards eight \$1,000 college scholarships annually.

### Award Criteria:

- Scholastic Achievement 50%
- Financial Need 25%
- Extra-Curricular Activities 25%

Applicants must be the legal dependent of a Tideland EMC member and must be graduating from a high school in one of the six counties served by Tideland EMC. Applicants may not be the dependent of a Tideland EMC employee or director. Winner must have been accepted by an accredited community college, four year college, or university.

**Application deadline: March 10**



## Message to our Member-Owners: So much for prognosticating

By Paul Spruill  
General Manager & CEO

### Right-of-Way Maintenance Update

In March, Lucas Tree Experts will complete tree trimming on Mary's Chapel Church Rd, Minor Run Rd, Durham Creek Rd and all side roads in the area.

Mowing crews will be working between Rose Bay and Swan Quarter including all side roads.

Please lend your full support to our tree trimming efforts. Trees are the number one cause of outages.

Last month this column focused on the eventual reduction of wholesale power cost adjustment (WPCA) credits. We really do expect them to trend back down.

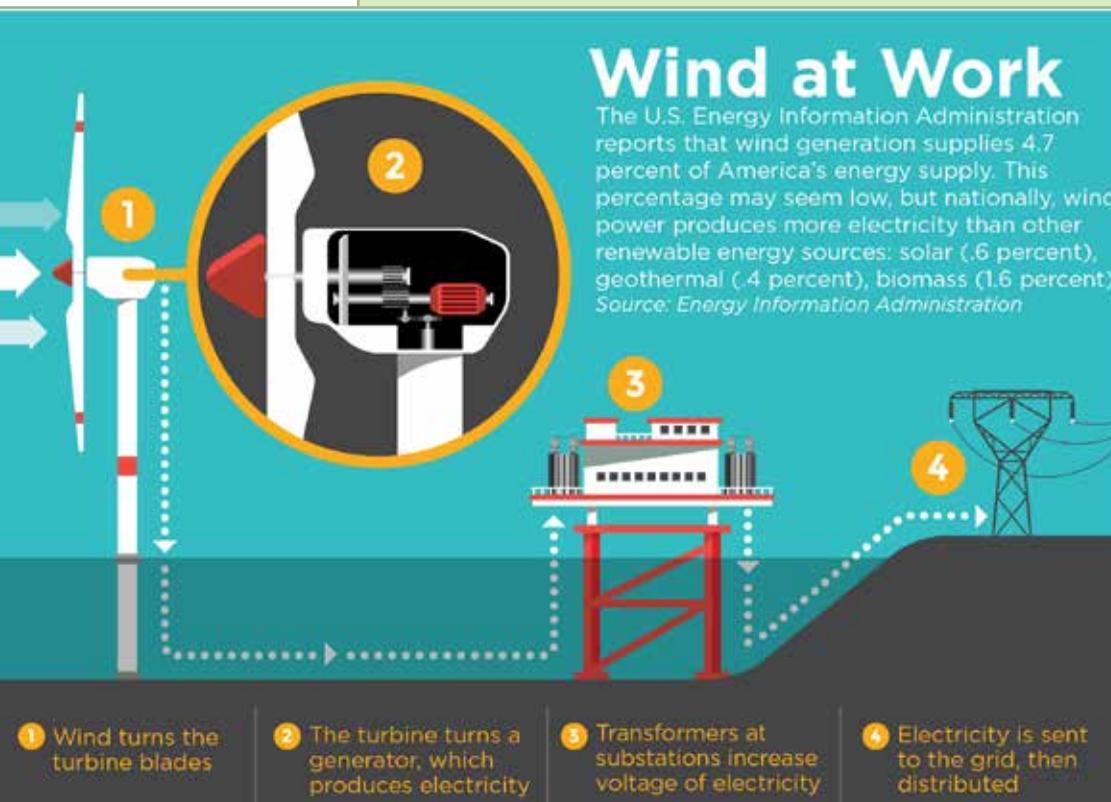
Fortunately that trend has not yet manifested itself as evidenced by our January and February billed WPCA. In January the credit was 1.056¢ per kilowatt hour (kWh) and was shortly topped by February with a WPCA credit of 1.081¢ per kWh. That brought our published residential rate of 10.58¢ per kWh down to 9.499¢ per kWh for all bills rendered during February, a reduction of 10%.

In fact, in January we set a new record when we issued WPCA credits totaling \$338,413 due to much high kWh sale. In January 2017, Tideland members used 5.5 million more kWh than they did in December 2016 when the WPCA credit per kWh was slightly higher. Before winter is over it is possible that we will issue nearly \$1 million in WPCA credits.

The weather this winter has been highly unusual. The average temperature for December was 47°F, which is in keeping with the historical average. But January temperatures, based on New Bern meteorological data, averaged 49°F, five degrees higher than the historical average. Based on the heating degree day data for January, home heating needs decreased 28% from the historical average.

The warming trend continued through the first part of February, and as long as you didn't turn on your air conditioner during those 70°-plus days, you really should be pretty pleased with your home's utility bill.

To see how temperature, humidity, heat index, wind speed, degree days and cloud cover impact your hourly and daily energy use log on to the member portal which can be accessed via [www.tidelandemc.com](http://www.tidelandemc.com).



### NC Winds of Change

On March 16, nine companies will participate in an auction for the right to develop a wind energy farm 24 miles off the NC coast. This will be the nation's seventh offshore wind auction.

The nation's first operational offshore wind farm, Deepwater Wind, is located off the coast of Rhode Island's Block Island. Additional projects are underway in New York, Maryland, Massachusetts and New Jersey.

# Plant the Right Tree in the Right Place

For more tips on smart tree planting in your community, contact your local electric cooperative or visit [www.ArborDay.org](http://www.ArborDay.org).

Trees beautify our neighborhoods, and when planted in the right spot, can even help lower energy bills. But the wrong tree in the wrong place can be a hazard... especially to power lines.

## LARGE TREES

Height/spread of more than 40 feet, such as:

- Maple
- Birch
- Oak
- Sweetgum
- Spruce
- Linden
- Pine

## MEDIUM TREES

Height/spread of 25 to 40 feet, such as:

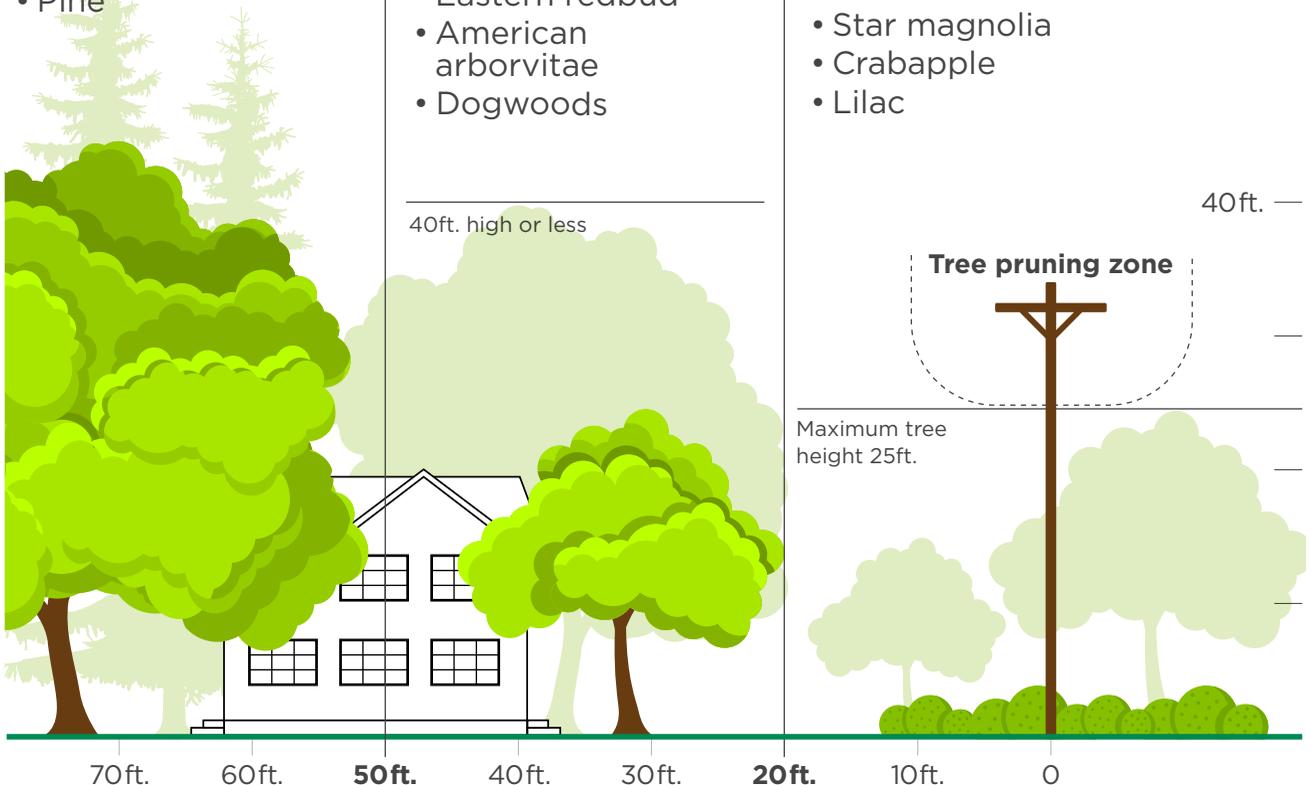
- Washington hawthorn
- Goldenraintree
- Eastern redbud
- American arborvitae
- Dogwoods

## SMALL TREES

Avoid planting within 20 feet of power lines. When planting within 20 feet is unavoidable, use only shrubs and small trees.

Height/spread of no more than 25 feet such as:

- Star magnolia
- Crabapple
- Lilac



**Be safe! Always call 811 before you dig to locate any buried utility lines.**

Source: The Arbor Day Foundation and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

# >> What's on that pole?

This illustration shows basic equipment found on electric power distribution poles. Not all poles have all this equipment on them. They vary according to location and the service they provide.

>> **Primary wires** run on top. Each usually carries 7,200 volts of electricity from a substation.

>> A **crossarm** holds power lines, allowing required clearances between lines.

>> **Surge arrestors** protect the transformer from lightning strikes.

>> A **secondary service drop** carries 120/240-volts of electricity to the end user. It has two "hot" wires from the transformer, and a bare neutral wire connected to the ground wire on the pole.

>> **Telephone and cable TV lines** are typically the lowest wires.

>> A head-high "**birth-mark**" shows the size of the pole, as well as where and when it was made.

>> **40-foot poles** are sunk six feet into the ground.

>> **Insulators** (made of porcelain or a composite) prevent energized wires from contacting each other or the pole.

>> The **neutral wire** acts as a line back to the substation and is tied to ground, balancing the electricity on the system.

>> **Transformers** convert higher voltage electricity from primary wires to lower voltage for use by consumers.

>> **Guy wires** help stabilize poles. They also are connected to the pole's ground wire.

>> **Pole ground wire**—running the length of the pole—connects to the neutral wire to complete the circuit inside the transformer. It also directs electricity from lightning safely into the earth.

>> Co-ops are responsible for **keeping vegetation around poles trimmed** to avoid interference with the electric system.

Illustration by Erin Binkley

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

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NEED A NEW HEATING SYSTEM? CHECK OUT TIDELAND'S VARIOUS HVAC REBATE PROGRAMS AT [WWW.TIDELANDEMC.COM](http://WWW.TIDELANDEMC.COM) BEFORE YOU BUY

# Feeling Drafty?

The typical house has enough air leaks to equal two open windows year round. However, most air leaks aren't attributed to windows. Here's what contributes to whole house air leakage:

- Floors, walls and ceilings 31%
- Heating/cooling ducts 15%
- Fireplaces 14%
- Plumbing penetrations 13%
- Doors 11%
- Windows 10%
- Fans and vents 4%
- Electrical outlets 2%

Home improvement priorities should begin with adding insulation, air sealing ductwork, closing fireplace dampers and spraying inexpensive expanding foam to seal plumbing/wiring penetrations.