

Pee Dee Hi-Lite

SERVING 20,900 PEE DEE ELECTRIC MEMBERS



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IMPROVED HOME EFFICIENCY: a resolution with a big impact

Eat more vegetables. Eat less chocolate. Exercise three times per week. New Year's resolutions give us the opportunity to start fresh and consider changes to our habits that lead to personal improvement. But what if our personal resolutions had a bigger overall impact, such as on our wallets?

Well luckily, there's one that can—a resolution for a more energy efficient 2017. Collectively, small changes add up to big savings, and a resolution for improved efficiency at your home could benefit not just your personal budget but also the environment.

Consider these five low- and no-cost tips to increase your home energy efficiency in 2017.

- **Make power strips work for you:** Plugged-in appliances and electronics use small amounts of power even when they are turned off. This is called phantom energy use, and it can be eliminated—with the flip of a switch—if your electronics are plugged into a power strip. According to Energy.gov, you can save \$100 per year by using power strips to reduce phantom load. Just be careful to never overload a power strip.
- **Use sunlight to help heat your home:** On bright, sunny, winter days, open your blinds or curtains to let the natural light from the sun warm up your home. Be sure to close your window treatments as the sun begins to set to keep the warmth in.
- **Save hot water:** It takes energy to heat water, and you can save energy by: 1) Adjusting your water heater's setting to 120 degrees Fahrenheit. If you've never adjusted it, chances are it is set at 140 degrees. 2) Installing low-flow showerheads, which not

only helps lower your energy bill for heating the water, but it also helps lower your water bill because you'll use less. 3) Washing clothes in cold water.

- **Install a smart or programmable thermostat,** or be diligent about adjusting yours manually: According to Energy.gov, you can save as much as 10 percent on heating and cooling per year by turning your thermostat back 7–10 degrees for eight hours a day in the winter and by setting it that much higher in the summer. You can do this while you're away during the day, as well as overnight. If set, smart or programmable thermostats can do this automatically, and you can achieve the same savings by remembering to adjust your manual thermostat.
- **Understand more about your home energy use:** Knowledge is power, and Pee Dee Electric offers several ways for you to learn more about your home energy use so you can make informed energy decisions. Log on to our customer service web portal, or install the PeeDeePower app, and start tracking your daily energy use so you can understand the factors that influence it. Also consider our Prepay program where you pay for your electricity in advance. Prepay helps create a stronger connection between energy use and budgeting, which often leads to improved energy decisions.

Creating a more energy efficient 2017 is not only a great resolution, but it's also an easy one to keep.

To learn more, visit PDEMC.com and follow us on Facebook at facebook.com/PeeDeeElectric. NorthCarolina.



Electric cooperatives are ready to work with elected officials

As the nation prepares to welcome a new Congress and Administration, America's electric cooperatives are ready to welcome back old friends and introduce ourselves to newcomers. The co-ops' message to elected officials, both old and new, Republican and Democrat, will be the same: we all need to work together to maintain and protect consumer access to safe, reliable and affordable electric service.

We have reason to believe this message will be well received. After all, co-ops speak for more than 42 million electric consumers nationwide, a sizeable constituency by any measure.

Moreover, whatever you thought of the 2016 campaign, one message came through loud and clear: many people don't believe their concerns are being heard. For member-owned cooperatives, listening to people is at the heart of our business model. And we carry our members' concerns about our energy future to public officials every day.

As co-ops reach out to engage with elected officials, we will build on the strength of Co-ops Vote, the grassroots initiative to reverse declining voter turnout in rural areas. Co-ops Vote did more than register voters. This initiative sent a strong message to the country's elected officials that rural electric consumers matter and our issues are important.

And co-ops will be reinforcing this message with a request that policymakers keep the needs of consumers front and center. Needs such as funding for infrastructure to strengthen and protect the electric grid. Determining the future of nuclear energy and other forms of power generation to establish an "all of the above" energy strategy for our nation; one that

balances cost, environmental concerns and the reliability of our nation's electric system. Elected officials will be making decisions affecting every aspect of the electric system, including the cost of electricity to consumers.

Advocating for these issues is nothing new. In fact, we've been doing it for over 75 years. And we're ready to continue this mission on your behalf. Here at Pee Dee Electric, we will be reaching out to local, state and federal officials. We will remind our elected officials about the unique member-owned, not-for-profit co-op business model. And we will remind politicians of the co-op's commitment to our members and their constituents.

In Washington, D.C., our national trade association, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, will conduct similar introductions, speaking with key agencies and departments within the new Administration. It is likely many of these new policymakers will know little or nothing of the co-op model. It is imperative that they understand the challenges in Rural America and their role in improving the quality of life in urban and rural areas.

Forging an energy future that serves rural consumers, and protecting access to safe, reliable and affordable electric power will be a bipartisan effort. Electric co-ops are optimistic. As we work with our elected leaders, we hope to renew a spirit of cooperation in our nation's Capital and in statehouses across the country. After all, cooperation is what co-ops do best!

Donnie H. Spivey



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT: **Monica D. Cole**

Job Title: Customer Service Representative III

Years of Service: 9

Hobbies, interest, etc.: Enjoys watching sporting events with family and spending time with family and friends

Getting the best of Old Man Winter: Cold weather prep

There's a lot to love about winter: hot chocolate, cozy sweaters and fires crackling in the hearth. At the same time, tumbling temperatures make heating systems work harder and create weather conditions that can sometimes lead to power outages.

Here's how you can prepare.

Connect with your co-op

Join many of your friends and neighbors in our social spaces, and get energy efficiency tips and real-time updates about our community, power outages and more. Connect at www.facebook.com/PeeDeeElectric.NorthCarolina and on Twitter @PeeDeeElectric.

Drop the inside temperature

When it's cold outside, your heating system has to work harder to heat your home. By lowering the thermostat a few degrees to 68 or as low as is comfortable, you can reduce your energy use—and your bill.

Then, layer up

By adding blankets to beds and sofas, and wearing layers of warm clothing, you'll be cozy and comfortable even if your home is a few degrees cooler.



Stock up

Winter conditions, especially icy precipitation, can cause power outages. Just in case, keep emergency supplies on hand. Include flashlights and extra batteries, food and water (for humans and pets), essential medications, salt for icy sidewalks and driveways, and a battery-powered radio to stay connected.

As the temperature drops, our commitment remains the same: to provide you, our members, with excellent electric service and powerful information to help you manage your energy use and weather the storm. No matter what conditions Old Man Winter brings, Pee Dee Electric remains prepared, and we hope you are prepared, too.

UNC and Wolfpack Basketball Camp Scholarships: Apply today!

Basketball season is here and Pee Dee Electric is now accepting applications from middle-school students for all-expense-paid scholarships to summer basketball camps at the University of North Carolina and NC State University. Young men can apply to attend the Roy Williams Carolina Basketball Camp in Chapel Hill, and young women can compete for a spot at the Wolfpack Women's Basketball Camp in Raleigh.

Students can download an application at www.ncelectriccooperatives.com/community beginning Jan. 2, 2017. Rising sixth through eighth graders who live in homes served by Pee Dee Electric are eligible to apply, and the final application deadline is March 31.

A Special Thank You

Hurricane Matthew was an unwelcome reminder of just how unpredictable storms and weather can be and mostly how storms of this magnitude can push the limits of our electric system. It was clear from the flooding and massive trees so easily uprooted, and eventually a declaration of disaster by our Governor that the storm was significant.

Despite the arrival of the storm taking place on a weekend, Pee Dee Electric was able to restore power to every member in

just four days. But we couldn't have done it without the support of our employees and our sister co-ops from Randolph EMC, French Broad EMC, Union Power and their many contractors.

Most of all we want to thank our members for their patience and understanding as we worked to restore power as quickly and safely as possible.

—Mark Rhyne

Director of Engineering & Operations

Bright Ideas

a celebration in education

Each year, Pee Dee Electric teams up with the North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives to award grants to teachers across our service territory for innovative, out-of-the-box classroom-based projects. Since 1997, Pee Dee Electric has awarded over \$228,000 in grant monies to dedicated teachers and educators in our communities.

This past December, educators and school administrators gathered alongside co-op employees and directors to celebrate the recipients of the 2016 Bright Ideas educational grant winners. Teachers from Anson, Richmond and Stanly counties were collectively awarded over \$12,000 for innovative projects that will inspire and enrich the educational experience for almost 2,000 students across all grade levels.

Join us as we celebrate this year's Bright Ideas grant winners.

- Ansonville Elementary – Justin Jones
"Solar Generator and Solar Powered Incubator"
- Lilesville Elementary – Lauren Dugan
"Building Young Minds and Skills"
- Mineral Springs Elementary – Wanda Wiggins
"SMART Spark – Integrating Science, Math, Art and Technology"
- Mineral Springs Elementary – Chuck Wright
"Synthesizing Music with littleBITS"
- Morven Elementary – Rosanna Teal
"Rip Van Winkle Dreams of a Library"
- Peachland-Polkton Elementary – MiRandi Chewning and Shelly Vetter, "Beating Childhood Obesity"
- Peachland-Polkton Elementary – Wendy Dagenhart
"Media Center Makerspace"



From left to right: Howard McLean, Assist. Superintendent; Marissa Phillips, Principal, Lilesville Elementary; Justin Jones, Ansonville Elementary; Lauren Dugan, Lilesville Elementary; Daniel Lattimore, Lilesville Elementary; Wendy Dagenhart, MiRandi Chewning and Travis Stegall, Principal, Peachland-Polkton Elementary.



Tanya Crisco, Principal; Bill Sorenson, S. Stanly High School



From left to right: Kate Smith, Principal, Mineral Springs Elementary; Willette Surgeon, Principal, W. Rockingham Elementary; Rebecca Shepherd, Chuck Wright, Wanda Wiggins, Mineral Springs Elementary; Jill Buck, W. Rockingham Elementary; Jeff Maples, Assoc. Superintendent, Richmond County Schools.

- South Stanly High School – Bill Sorenson
"Reading Robots"
- West Rockingham Elementary – Jill Buck
"Learning to Code, Coding to Learn"



XYLEM
TREE EXPERTS

Right-of-Way update

Pee Dee Electric has contracted with Xylem Tree Experts to perform right of way maintenance, vegetation management and tree trimming services along our lines beginning in early January 2017. There will be Pee Dee Electric signage along with the Xylem company logo on all service vehicles. Should you have any questions, feel free to contact our offices at 704-694-2114.

Pee Dee Hi-Lite

Published by Pee Dee Electric
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