

A publication for members of Edgecombe-Martin County

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



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# Customer Appreciation Day To Be Held on Oct. 6

## ALONG THE LINE

As member-owned enterprises, co-ops are owned largely by the people who live and work in the communities they serve. That gives us a different perspective from businesses owned by distant investors.

Community is not just where we work, it's why we work. Cooperatives are motivated to serve their members, not outside investors. Doing that means we must also serve the communities in which our members live, work and play. Perhaps the best theme for co-op month is "Cooperatives: Owned by our members. Committed to our communities."

Each year, Edgecombe-Martin County EMC holds Customer Appreciation Day in October to show appreciation for our member-owners and to recognize the importance of cooperatives around the world. Nearly 900 member-owned electric cooperatives provide electricity for 37 million people in 47 states. Owned and governed by the consumers they serve, electric co-ops have been demonstrating strong commitment to their local communities since they turned on the lights in rural America in the 1930s.

This year Customer Appreciation Day will be held at the Cooperative on **Thursday, October 6**. Each registered member will be treated to a hot dog lunch with chips and a drink. Members and guests will receive a meal voucher upon registering in the main lobby of the office, and **lunch will be served from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m.**

We look forward to seeing you at Customer Appreciation Day on Thursday, October 6!

*Customer Appreciation Day is an annual event at the co-op that allows us to show our members how much we appreciate them. This year it will be held on Thursday, October 6.*



### Residential Prepaid Account Service Is Here!



- **No more deposits to pay**
  - **No more monthly electric bills**
- **No more late payment penalty fees**
- **Direct control of your energy budget**
  - **User-friendly In-Home-Display that updates you on your current energy balance**

# Heat Pump Water Heater Pilot Project Update

We are always excited when we find a product or service that we feel can help our members be more energy efficient in their homes or businesses. However, more often than not, some of these “too good to be true” deals turn out to be just that. We also believe there is no better way to actually gauge the effectiveness of a product or service than to put it to the test, and that is exactly what we did with a Rheem heat pump water heater that we informed you about in the November 2010 issue of Along The Line.

In September 2010, we implemented a pilot project to test and compare a standard 50-gallon electric water heater against a 50-gallon Rheem heat pump water heater. The heat pump water heater had been touted to be twice as efficient as a standard 50-gallon water heater. The first step was to sub-meter the existing 50-gallon water heater to see how much energy it consumed over the next four months. Once we had enough consumption data from the existing water heater; we installed the new heat pump water heater to see just how reliable and efficient it would be, and this is how the numbers have stacked up so far. Wow!



*This Rheem heat pump water heater has proven to be approximately 138% more efficient than the previous 50-gallon conventional electric water heater that was in service before.*

	Kilowatt Hour Consumption
<b>Conventional 50 Gallon Water Heater</b>	<b>432.24 kWh</b> (Sept. 14, 2010 - Jan. 12, 2011) <i>Approx. 4 months</i>
<b>Rheem 50 Gallon Heat Pump Water Heater</b>	<b>320.22 kWh</b> (Jan. 12, 2011 - Aug. 8, 2011) <i>Approx. 7 months</i>

## It's Time To Get Your Heating System Serviced

Many things contribute to your homes monthly energy bill, but none of them have more of an impact than what type of HVAC system you use to heat and cool your home.

Individuals using geothermal or air source heat pumps are already utilizing two of the most cost-effective solutions to help curb their energy bills during the winter months. However, consumers using propane or oil furnaces can expect to spend a considerable amount more each year to heat their home based on the current market price for these fuels.

You can also save energy this fall and winter by having your furnace tuned up. Most furnaces can go approximately three to five years between service calls and longer, if you change the filters regularly. Oil furnaces need to be serviced once a year, because they get dirty and

need annual adjustment.

As many know, changing filters regularly is one of the key maintenance tasks to keep any type of furnace running efficiently. Make sure that you know where your furnace's filter is located and what size it is. Inspect it periodically, and replace it when it is dirty. How frequently you need to change the filter depends on the amount of dirt in the house and around the furnace and also how much time the furnace runs.

Duct air leakage is one of the largest energy-wasters in your heating system. Heating contractors can check your ducts for air leakage, and seal the biggest leaks. Contractors start by sealing the larger joints near the furnace, and then work out towards the



*You should check your entire HVAC system each year, including your ductwork, to make sure air leaks are kept to a minimum.*

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# LINES FROM THE C.E.O.

## Thanks for Your Support and Understanding During Hurricane Irene!

Well, Hurricane Irene may be long gone but she definitely left her mark on homes, crops and so many other things across Eastern North Carolina. Some of the destruction Irene caused can still be seen today as you ride through our rural communities, but a large part of the debris has been cleaned up as residents have moved on with their normal day-to-day activities.

Hurricane Irene was the first hurricane that has gravely impacted our area since Hurricane Isabel made landfall on September 18, 2003, near Drum Inlet, North Carolina. Although we have been very fortunate in this regard; the lull in major storm impacts on our area did not allow us to become unprepared for these type of events. We continually work to update our emergency response plan and to implement technologies and procedures that will help us restore power more efficiently to our members should a major storm impact our area. Our line crews have also traveled to Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi and Kentucky to assist with power restoration efforts since that time, so they are always well-prepared for major weather events such as this.

We had all of our line crews ready to begin restoring power as Hurricane Irene made landfall on Saturday, August 27 near Cape Lookout, NC. Some of the first outages began to come in to our storm center around 3 a.m. that morning, and crews began restoring power to these members immediately. As the storm approached, crews continued to work until conditions became unsafe, and we monitored the weather as the storm moved slowly to the north to determine when crews could resume power restoration efforts. As the winds diminished to around 35 mph, crews were sent back into the field to assess damages and to begin restoring power to as many members as possible. Additional line crews from Haywood EMC, Pee Dee EMC, Surry-Yadkin EMC and Pike Energy Solutions also arrived around this time to help restore power to our affected members.

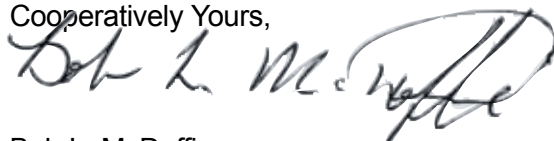
Edgecombe-Martin County EMC was left with over 11,200 members (approximately 95% of our system) without power by the time Hurricane Irene had finally moved on. Dominion Power North Carolina had suffered damage to their transmission infrastructure that supplied power to 6 of our distribution substations, and power was finally restored to each of these substations by mid-day on Wednesday, August 31. This enabled us to restore power to several thousand members in the matter of a few hours.

To add insult to injury, severe thunderstorms with possible tornadoes and damaging hail swept across portions of our service territory near Pinetops on Tuesday, August 30, that caused more damage and some members to lose power that had already been

restored. By late afternoon on Thursday, September 1, power had been restored to all members that had not suffered damage to their homes or meter base equipment. Crews were dispatched to these locations to reconnect service once members had an electrician repair their meter base or mast head. After the smoked cleared, nearly 8,500 man-hours had been worked by everyone involved in order to get the lights back on.

We would like to thank each and every one of our members for their patience and understanding as we worked to restore power. Although our phone lines went down late in the evening on Saturday, August 27; we used our website, radio and TV media channels to disseminate updates to our members. A large majority of our membership was very understanding about power outages due to Hurricane Irene, and we sincerely appreciate all of the letters and calls we received praising our employees and assisting crews from other areas for their hard work. Some discerning comments were received via e-mail and over the phone, and we would be glad to speak with any member individually about their concerns. Again, thanks so much for your patience as we worked to restore power as quickly and safely as possible.

Cooperatively Yours,



Bob L. McDuffie



*Damage such as this was not uncommon from Hurricane Irene. This triple circuit pole was broke by a tree on Davistown-Mercer Rd.*

# Noel Lee, Jr. Scholarships Awarded

Paul Andrews, Mandy Millwood and Kaitlyn Andrews were selected as the 2011 recipients of the Noel Lee, Jr. Memorial Scholarships by a panel of judges. Each recipient received a \$1,000 scholarship to assist them with school related costs, such as tuition, books and laboratory fees.

Paul Andrews is currently enrolled at Edgecombe Community College in the registered nursing program and has 2 semesters remaining in order to complete the degree requirements. Mandy Millwood is also enrolled at Edgecombe-Community College and this is her first semester in the associate's degree nursing program. Kaitlyn Andrews will also be attending Edgecombe Community College and is interested in obtaining a degree in library science after completing her associate's degree requirements.

Applicants must be a member of Edgecombe-Martin County EMC or live in a home served by the co-op, to be eligible for the Noel Lee, Jr. Memorial Scholarship. This scholarship is intended for a student who plans to attend a one or two-year vocational, technical or community college program of study from a North Carolina accredited school. Applications can be completed online at [www.ememc.com](http://www.ememc.com). Funds for the scholarships are raised through various raffles and activities of the Volunteer Action Committee of Edgecombe-Martin County EMC.

To receive more information, please call 252-641-9513.



*Dorothy Weathersby of the Volunteer Action Committee, presented Noel Lee, Jr. Memorial Scholarship checks for \$1,000 each to (l-r) Paul Andrews, Mandy Millwood and Kaitlyn Andrews on August 19, at the co-op's office.*

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*Your HVAC system should be cleaned and inspected regularly to make sure it is operating at its maximum efficiency. Failing to have a certified technician inspect your unit(s) annually will usually lead to major problems when you need it most.*

tools by visiting our website at [www.ememc.com](http://www.ememc.com). There you will find how to videos, downloadable energy saving documents, an interactive fuel cost comparison worksheet and tons of useful information at [TogetherWeSave.com](http://TogetherWeSave.com).

Also, don't forget that the recommended thermostat setting during the winter months is 68 degrees. Experts say that for every degree you increase your thermostat during the winter, your heating system consumes approximately 1%-3% more energy. The best piece of advise is to set it and forget it, because adjusting your thermostat up and down can actually cause your heating system to consume more energy.

branch ducts as access allows. Believe it or not, duct tape is not a good choice for sealing ducts because its adhesive usually fails after a short time. Duct mastic, available in cans or buckets, is an effective and permanent material for sealing duct air leaks and can be purchased at almost all home improvement stores.

If you are tired of paying high energy bills on a monthly basis, please call and speak with one of our qualified energy advisors. They can help you start saving money today, that you can use for more important things tomorrow. If you are a do-it-yourselfer, you can also use our online energy savings

## ALONG THE LINE

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

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Hwy. 33 East, P.O. Box 188  
Tarboro, NC 27886  
252-823-2171 • 1-800-445-6486  
Office Hours: 8a.m. - 5p.m. (M-F)

After Hours Outage Reporting  
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