

A publication for members of Edgecombe-Martin County

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Co-op helps with Summer Box Fan Program
~ page 22



Lines from the V.P. of Member & Industrial Development, "New Local Businesses"
~ page 23



More Insulation is Better
~ page 24

Prepaid Account Service is Proving to be a Popular Option

ALONG THE LINE


It has only been three months since we introduced and began offering the Prepaid Account Service option to residential members, but the interest and participation from members has been overwhelming.

As of July 6, 280 members have signed-up to participate in the program. Many of the members choosing to participate in the program have converted their existing postpaid residential account to a prepaid account. These members are able to use their existing regular and security deposits on-hand in order to pay past and current amounts due, and if any deposit is left over they can use it to make future energy purchases. This one option has enabled 186 members to use \$98,000 in total deposits to pay-off past and current bills and to make future energy purchases if applicable.

Existing members converting their account to a prepaid account can also set-up a debt recovery plan with the co-op where 25% of future payments go towards paying off their old debt. This option has also proven to be popular among members to help them pay off debt while having more control over their energy budget. So far, 80 members have utilized this option to help get them back on track.

New members are also realizing the benefit of the prepaid system. Many new members are choosing the prepaid option due to the timely usage information received through the In-Home-Display, payment flexibility, no deposits are required and no late payment penalty fees are assessed.

If you think the prepaid account option may be for you, please give us a call or stop by the office. We would be glad to explain the program to you in depth so you can decide if it suits your individual needs. This service option is available to all residential members with a 200 amp service, and as you can see it's growing in popularity with new and existing members alike!




Edgecombe-Martin County EMC
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

PREPAID ACCOUNT CARD

"YOUR ENERGY, YOUR CHOICE"

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**

Fans Help Some Seniors Beat the Summer Heat

There are several programs that Edgecombe-Martin County EMC helps administer or fund in some way on an annual basis that we believe provide a direct benefit to the members and communities that we serve. One of those ongoing programs is the Seniors Heat Relief Program that is administered by the Edgecombe County Office on Aging.

This year the co-op donated \$500 to the Edgecombe County Office on Aging to help purchase box fans for the program. The fans are available to individuals age 60 or older and they must be a resident of Edgecombe County. Fans can be obtained while supplies last by calling the Edgecombe County Office on Aging at 641-5831. A driver's license or other valid form of photo identification must be shown to verify age and documentation showing proof of residence in Edgecombe County will also be needed.

Edgecombe-Martin also provides educational material free to the public in the form of booklets and pamphlets, on keeping cool and conserving energy during the summer months. If you are interested in obtaining any of this material please call, 1-800-445-6486 or write to: Edgecombe-Martin County EMC, P.O. Box 188, Tarboro, NC 27886.



Eddie Stocks presents Deborah Coley of the Edgecombe County Office on Aging with a check for \$500 to help purchase box fans for the Seniors Heat Relief Program.

Grilling Safety

As football season gears up, we can count on more North Carolinians firing up their grills. However, the National Fire Protection Association estimates that grills caused approximately 8,000 fires from 2004-2008, so before you start grilling this summer and fall, take a moment to become familiar with a few simple safety tips.

Before Starting the Grill

- Position your grill at least three feet away from all objects, including your house, deck rails, and any shrubs or bushes.
- Check all grill connections to make sure they are connected properly. Do not use a match to check for gas leaks. If you detect a leak, turn off the gas immediately and do not attempt to light the grill again until you have had the leak fixed by a professional.
- Check for broken parts, rust or any other structural damage and replace any part that needs attention.
- Only use starter fluid that is made for grills when starting a fire in a charcoal grill. This fluid is made to minimize flare-ups.



When You're Grilling

- Keep all children and pets away from the grill until it is completely cool.
- Avoid wearing exceptionally loose-fitting clothing when grilling. Be especially careful to not wear loose-fitting sleeves because they could catch on fire.
- To avoid burns and splatters, use tongs or spatulas with long handles when turning food on the grill.
- Keep your grill clean to minimize flare-ups.

Other Grilling Safety Tips

- Never bring a grill indoors or into any unventilated space. This creates fire and carbon monoxide hazards.
- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions when starting and operating your grill.

Go ahead – make your next mouth-watering meal on the grill. With these tips in mind, you'll stay safe while enjoying time outdoors with family, friends and good food.



HOLIDAY CLOSING

Edgecombe-Martin County EMC will be closed on Monday, Sept. 5, in observance of Labor Day.

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Payments after office hours and on holidays can be placed in the night deposit box or you may choose to utilize the convenience of online bill-pay by logging on to www.ememc.com.

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To report a loss of power or an emergency after hours, please call 1-800-690-0657.

LINES FROM THE V.P. OF MEMBER & INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

New Businesses Benefit Your Cooperative and Our Communities

Talking with local small business owners these days one can quickly see the hurdles faced in keeping a business open and profitable. Historically, small businesses in our country have been a vital economical engine driving our economy and employing workers. On average, successful small businesses are opened and in operation for 17½ years. For each one of these businesses that succeed, four businesses fail within the first three years of operation.

Edgecombe Martin EMC has the opportunity to meet with new business owners as they are establishing electrical service for their new operations or store fronts. Knowing the statistics of those businesses that don't make it past their first few years of operation, we felt if there were an opportunity for the Cooperative to help these new business succeed, we should.

Starting with this issue of Along the Line, Edgecombe Martin EMC will highlight new state-licensed commercial businesses that are located on the cooperative's electrical system. The businesses must receive electrical service from your cooperative and be open to the general public. In highlighting these businesses, the cooperative does not endorse or warranty the products or services these businesses provide, but are simply making our membership aware of the new business and encouraging its' success.

The business highlighted in this issue is Blazen Cattle Company, LLC. Blazen Cattle Company opened its doors for business on April 1, 2011. Now April Fool's day is usually considered a day of jokes and pranks but Blazen Cattle Company is no joke. Owned and operated by James and Crystal Bulluck, Blazen Cattle is serious about top-quality, locally-grown meat and pork products. Located just 2.5 miles west of Tarboro on Howard Avenue Extension, Blazen Cattle specializes in local grain fed and grass fed cattle as well as pork, lamb and goat.

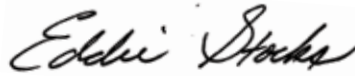
The hours of operation are Monday-Saturday, from 10:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m. All products are grown locally and slaughtered either in Robersonville or Bailey and butchered on-site to your specific specifications.

Blazen Cattle Company has recently added fresh produce to the store front, and according to James, intends to have a bakery within the facility by the printing of this article. The bakery will specialize in fresh bread, and pastries baked daily and cup cakes and cakes made to order.

If you are interested in fresh and locally grown meats butchered to your specifications;

stop by Blazen Cattle Company or check them out on Facebook at Blazen Cattle Company, LLC Butcher Shop.

Cooperatively Yours,



Eddie Stocks



(Top) Blazen Cattle Company, LLC is located approximately 2.5 miles west of Tarboro on Howard Avenue Ext. They provide locally grown meats butchered to your specific liking. (Bottom) Owner's James and Crystal Bulluck invite you to stop by their butcher shop for the opportunity to purchase some of the best quality meats in the area.

Insulating Your Attic: More is Better

Is there enough insulation in your attic? By adding insulation, you can improve your home's energy efficiency and save money.

With adequate attic insulation, your home's heating/cooling system will operate more efficiently. It will keep you cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter—and it will keep more money in your wallet. As TogetherWeSave.com has shown, adding insulation to your attic can save you \$125 a year.

Older homes tend to have less attic insulation than newer ones. An energy audit can indicate whether additional insulation is needed.

Before adding insulation to your attic, you'll need to determine how much insulation is already installed, what kind it is and how thick it is. Next, you'll need to know the R-value—which indicates the insulation's resistance to heat—of the existing attic insulation. The higher the R-value, the greater the insulating effectiveness. Once you know the R-value, you can determine how much insulation to add by using the U.S. Department of Energy's Zip Code Insulation Program.

Now you're ready to decide what kind of insulation to install: loose-fill or blanket (batt and roll) insulation. Loose-fill insulation consists of small particles of fiber, foam or other materials. Blanket

insulation, the most common and widely available type of insulation, comes in the form of batts and rolls made from mineral wool, plastic fibers and natural fibers. Loose-fill insulation is usually less expensive to install than batt insulation. And when installed properly, loose-fill insulation can provide better coverage.

For other tips on how to save energy—and money—visit Touchstone Energy's energy-saving website or call the energy experts at Edgecombe-Martin County EMC. Find out how the little changes add up at www.TogetherWeSave.com.

ALONG THE LINE

www.ememc.com

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Reminder Teachers! Submit Your Grant Before the Early Bird Deadline



**BRIGHT
IDEAS**

There is no better time to brainstorm your Bright Ideas Grant into existence than over your summer break! In fact, there is a \$500 Visa Gift Card waiting for one lucky teacher from across North Carolina that submits an application before the **"Early Bird" deadline on August 15.**

If you're a K-12 grade teacher and have an idea you think would help make learning in your classroom more fun, go to www.ncbrightideas.com and submit your Bright Ideas application online. The website offers grant writing tips and describes some previous grants that have been funded across the state. Each year, Edgecombe-Martin County EMC funds approximately 7 creative grants that help teachers implement these savvy ideas into their classrooms.

So teachers, do your students a favor and don't let this summer pass without letting us here about your creative project. Who knows, you could be one of this year's Bright Ideas grant winners, but you must submit your application before it's too late!