

carteret-craven electric cooperative



Nearly 1.3 million in capital credits set aside

One of the many benefits of being a member-owner of a cooperative is the capital credit program. These credits, or operating margins, are the amount of money the cooperative earned above and beyond operating expenses.

Members allow the cooperative to use these funds to provide solvency and for necessary upgrades to facilities. Once the amount of capital credits is determined for a given year, the money is credited to members' accounts based on individual usage for that year.

After a certain period, a general retirement takes place, and the funds are returned to the members. In March 2004, \$1,299,633 in capital credits was set aside, or allocated, for 2003.

If you would like to know the approximate amount of your 2003 allocation you need to know the total of the payments you made in 2003 and multiply that figure by .027. For example, if you paid \$1,500 in 2003, then your capital credits would come to \$40.50

Questions about capital credits? Ask for accounting when you call (252) 247-3107 or 1-800-682-2217.

Coming of age...

Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative (CCEC) will soon have a way for its member-owners to pay their electricity bills or track previous usage and upcoming payments with a new "e-commerce" site available through the Internet. "Our e-commerce

package is in the testing phase. Soon, customers will be able to view their current bill and account history online, calculate their next bill, and make credit card and check payments on the Web," said CCEC Executive Vice President and General Manager Craig Conrad.

CCEC wants to meet the demands of fast-paced, emerging technologies and the needs of its members who are eager to do business online, whether it be for paying bills, changing or checking account information, or signing up for specialized services.

ON THE WEB

**Check out the new look of our Website.
We have redesigned the site and added some new features.**

www.carteretcravenelectric.coop

Lifestyle plays a big role in energy usage

How can you minimize the impact of the higher summer electricity rate?

Monitoring your usage and conserving energy are the best ways to keep from being caught off guard.

Fuel prices drive electricity costs, and there is little any of us can do about that. What we can do is control how much electricity we use, day by day, month by month.

Instead of blaming the electric meter for your monthly energy usage, consider your family's lifestyle and the appliances in your home.

"If your decision is to keep your air conditioning thermostat at 72 degrees, then be prepared to pay a higher price for those extra degrees of comfort," said Gary Zajac, CCEC Vice President of Marketing and External Affairs.

The U.S. Department of Energy recommends a summer thermostat setting no lower than 78 degrees for energy conservation. While that may not seem low enough on the hottest days, your air conditioning unit may never be able to reach your ideal comfort level, yet it will keep trying, the meter will keep turning, and your electric bill will keep going up.

If you want to shave costs another way, be careful about how and when you use your clothes dryer and other heat-generating appliances. The dryer is a big contributor to the cost of electricity in your home.

"Not only is it generating heat, it is sucking the cool air out of your house," Zajac said. "Don't dry clothes during the hottest part of the day, and run the dryer only as long as necessary. Keep dryer vents and filters clean."

Other high energy users are water heaters and stoves.

"Rather than cook indoors on hot days, fire up the charcoal grill," Zajac said.

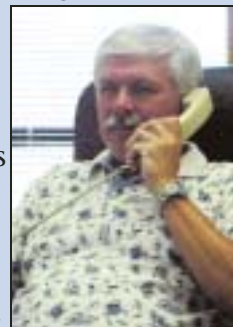
How will you know if your conservation efforts are making a difference? Unlike the gas gauges in our cars, which let us know

when we have used up our fuel, electric meters simply tally the amount of electricity used, and you are billed

monthly on that amount. But, just as you can calculate your vehicle's miles-per-gallon gas usage, you can calculate your daily, semi-weekly or weekly electricity usage by using the chart included on these pages.

"If more people were aware of how much electricity they are using as they are using it, rather than when they receive a bill, they would be more likely to conserve," Zajac said.

Once again, the savings depends on your ability to monitor and control your usage.



GARY ZAJAC



Don't want to be put on hold?

As our lives become busier and busier and we become more accustomed to getting information nearly instantly, it's tough to be put on hold when you make a phone call. At Carteret-Craven Electric, we take pride in trying to answer your call promptly, accurately and efficiently, but there are peak times when there just aren't enough people to answer each call on the first ring or two.

Mondays and Wednesdays are the busiest days, says CCEC Manager of Customer Services Cheryl Slater. Mondays are busy because people have saved their questions from the weekend. Wednesdays bring a high number of calls into the office because that is "cut-off" day for those who are trying to get their bills paid before their service is disconnected. Call volume is higher as well at the first of the month and the middle of the month, Slater said.

If you have general questions that are not urgent, you might want to try calling on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, Slater said. Better yet, you may also find out the information you are looking for by accessing our Website (www.carteretcravenelectric.coop).

Hurricane season:

What you should know before, during and after the lights go out

While hurricanes don't typically threaten this early in the season, it is never too soon to go over your hurricane preparedness plan. Whether you will evacuate or will ride out a storm, you need to plan your actions for before, during and after a hurricane.

If a hurricane strikes our area, chances are good that the power will go out. You can help reduce those chances or reduce the time it takes to get power restored by trimming back dead or weak branches from trees well before the storm arrives.

Here are some additional measures you should take:

- If power is lost or you plan to evacuate, turn off your heating and air conditioning systems, as well as your electric range. Unplug sensitive electronic appliances such as televisions, VCRs, microwave ovens and computers.
- Make sure family members know how to turn off electricity, gas and water.
- Be sure to wait 10 to 15 minutes before turning on appliances and heating systems after power is restored.
- If your home is damaged, look for electrical system damage, too. If you see sparks, broken or frayed wires, or if you smell hot insulation, turn off the electricity at the main breaker box. However, do not step in water to get to the box; call an electrician.
- If power lines or poles are down in your yard or in the street, always treat them as if they were energized and dangerous. Call the cooperative or emergency services officials to report the location so repairs can be made as soon as possible.
- The real danger of fallen power lines is

often hidden. Post-storm debris can conceal power lines that have fallen. Fallen trees that contain energized power lines can energize any item they contact, such as metal fences, a pond, or water. Even the ground can be energized near fallen power lines.

- If your electric service is out, check with neighbors to see if they have power. If they do, you may have a blown fuse or a tripped a breaker. Never replace a fuse or reset a circuit breaker with wet hands or while standing on a wet (or even damp) surface.



- If you are without electricity and want to use a portable generator, make sure it is in a well-ventilated area. Don't connect the generator to your home's electrical panel or fuse boxes. Electricity can feed back into the power lines, which can endanger linemen and damage electric service facilities.

- If you must use candles, remember that open windows and gusty winds can knock them over or blow flammable materials into them, so be careful where you place them.

- If you must cook food with Sterno or charcoal, remember to do so outside in a well-ventilated area. Cooking indoors with Sterno or charcoal will produce deadly carbon-monoxide fumes.

Finally, helping our line crews is appreciated, but working with power lines and electricity requires a high degree of training. To restore power with the highest degree of safety, restoration must be accomplished in a certain order and by specific procedures.

Above all, the hard working people restoring your power appreciate your patience and understanding that they are doing everything they can to restore your power as quickly and safely as possible.

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Touchstone Energy®