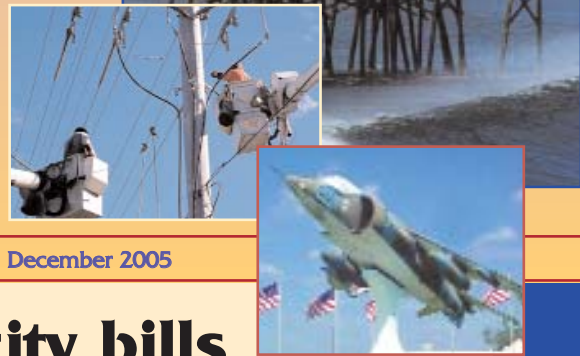


MEMBER

From Cedar Island to Cedar Point
and many places in between

News



A newsletter for members of Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative

December 2005

Fuel CRUNCH impacts electricity bills

Energy crunch, energy crisis, fuel shortages... it seems that all we have seen and heard lately are those words in newspaper headlines and out of the mouths of television news reporters. The only constant seems to be that energy prices are significantly higher, with petroleum and natural gas leading the pack.

We can ignore the news stories or turn off our TVs, but the fact remains that energy prices have been fluctuating wildly over the past several months, and that has had an impact on all of us.

At Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative, one of our guiding principles is to provide reli-

able power to our members while striving to contain costs and maintain financial health. The directors you elect and your cooperative employees are your neighbors and friends. What affects you, affects them. If fuel costs more, we *all* pay more. That's what we are facing now and likely through the winter months, which experts believe will bring even higher energy prices. To meet current power costs, we have had to raise the wholesale power/fuel cost adjustment on all members' bills.



If we step back and take a broader look, we see that electricity has remained our most stable energy source. Wholesale power costs since the mid-1990s have been extremely stable. However, costs of other fuels, such as natural gas and gasoline, have been very volatile. Consumers are paying seven times what they paid for natural gas just

a few years ago, a 55 percent increase this year alone.

On the larger scale, natural gas fuels about 10 percent of the power plants that supply cooperatives, but accounts for 30 percent of price we are paying for wholesale power today. Carteret-Craven's wholesale power cost has increased by nearly 22 percent over the past several months, and we've got to the pay those bills. The coming winter months are expected to keep prices high.

On the brighter side, we believe that fuel cost volatility will eventually stabilize - two months, six months, who knows? We may be seeing some lessening of prices as we write this article.

We carefully study the energy market, yet none of us has a crystal ball.

We promise that we will keep the adjustment in place only as long as necessary to pay the cooperative's power costs.

Please remember, we are all in the same boat.

on the web

To learn more about the wholesale power/fuel cost adjustment or energy savings tips, go to:

www.carteretcravenelectric.coop



Carteret-Craven's offices in Havelock & Morehead City will be closed Friday, Dec. 23, Monday, Dec. 26, and Monday, Jan. 2, so our employees can enjoy time with family and friends. Have a safe holiday and happy New Year!



carteret-craven electric cooperative



**Happy holidays,
from your
cooperative
directors!**

Co-op members, employees rise to challenges in '05

Sometimes change comes slowly, giving us time to reflect on where we've been and where we are going. Other times, it feels like someone has pulled the rug out from under us, and we have to scramble to land on our feet.

When the cooperative was established in 1940, it was because change was in the air. Our more urban counterparts were enjoying the convenience and efficiency of electricity, but it wasn't profitable for the power companies to extend this awesome new commodity to rural communities. For the few of us who remember it, those were exciting times. Many wondered then if the changes weren't coming at us too fast. But, we adapted then and continue to adapt to the light-speed changes we see today.

With change come challenges. Our counterparts in the Gulf Coast know that all too well. But the cooperative spirit helped get them back on their feet after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita left many without homes and many more without power. Your cooperative, like dozens of others across the nation, sent crews to help. And, when Hurricane Ophelia took aim at our area, cooperative crews from across the state were here within hours to rebuild our damaged lines.

Despite the challenges of 2005, we've had a

good year. Hurricane Ophelia could have been much worse. You, the members, have looked beyond your own financial concerns and have given generously, through Operation RoundUP[®] and individually, for a variety of worthy causes. You helped us raise money for cooperative employees in Mississippi who lost their homes to Hurricane Katrina; for our friends and neighbors who have fallen on hard times; for our educators and students through foundation scholarships, Bright Ideas grants, and Youth Leadership Weekend; and for families who would not have much to celebrate this holiday season without your help.

As always, we will continue to provide you electricity with a commitment to innovation, reliability, cost effectiveness and accountability, and a commitment to you and the communities we serve. That was the spirit of the handful of our residents when they formed a coalition to bring electricity to everyone - not just those in our cities and towns - and that is the spirit that underlies everything we do as your elected directors.

We wish you and your families a most peaceful holiday season and look forward to serving you in the New Year.

CCEC scholarships available to college-bound seniors

Paying for college is getting harder and harder these days, but the cooperative wants to make it a little easier for five high school seniors pursuing higher education beginning in the fall of 2006.

Five high school seniors, at least one each from East Carteret, West Carteret, Croatan and Havelock high schools, will be selected. Students who attend other schools, such as Jones Senior or Grammercy, are pooled with the remaining applicants for the fifth scholarship. The scholarships are for \$1,000 annually and are renewable for an additional three years.

ELIGIBILITY

- Students' primary residence must be on the cooperative's lines.
- Applicants must be a high school senior in current graduating class and must be accepted at accredited 2-year community or technical college or 4-year college or university.
- Applicants cannot be a close relative of a CCEC employee or director - close relative being a spouse, child, grandchild, great-

grand child, brother, sister, aunt, uncle, niece or nephew, by blood, by adoption, or in-law of the employee or director.

CRITERIA


- 50% Need
- 25% Academic Achievement (transcripts, SAT score, Grade Point Average)
- 25% Extracurricular Activity (clubs, sports, projects, community, church)

All applicants will be considered on the stated criteria, regardless of race, age, color, religion, sex, handicap or national origin.

Forms are available online at www.carteretcravenelectric.coop, from the counselors' offices at each school and at Carteret-Craven's offices at 450 McCotter Blvd. in Havelock; and 1300 Highway 24 in Morehead City. Members may request applications be mailed, by calling our office at 252-727-2238.


Funds for the scholarships are provided by member donations to Operation RoundUp®.

This is not a jeans ad.
This is not a shampoo ad.
This is not an ad for cell phone service.



This is an ad about earning one of five \$4,000 college scholarships from carteret-craven electric cooperative.

See your counselor.
You've got the power...
... now do something with it.

www.carteretcravenelectric.coop Your "Touchtone Energy" Partner 

New scholarships available for community college students

The Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative Community College Scholarship is available for students who live on the cooperative's lines and are attending or planning to attend Carteret Community College or Craven Community College.

Four scholarships will be awarded - two at each college - at \$250 per student each semester. The scholarships are renewable for three additional semesters, for a total of \$1,000 per student for two years of school. To renew, the student must maintain a 2.5 grade-point average. The scholarship expires after five semesters from award date.

Scholarships will be awarded according to need (75 percent) and merit (25 percent), which will be based on a letter from the student describing his or her educational goals and plans for the future, as well as any special needs or circumstances the student may have.

Applications are available at the financial aid offices at both community colleges or online at www.carteretcravenelectric.coop.

The completed packet must be received no later than 5 p.m. on December 15, 2005.

Don't forget safety when decorating for holidays

Each year fires occurring during the holiday season injure 2,600 individuals and cause over \$930 million in damage. According to the United States Fire Administration (USFA), there are simple life-saving steps you can take to ensure a safe and happy holiday.

Selecting a Tree for the Holiday

Needles on fresh trees should be green and hard to pull back from the branches, and the needle should not break if the tree has been freshly cut. The trunk should be sticky to the touch. An old tree will lose lots of needles if you bounce the tree trunk on the ground. It has dried out, and is a fire hazard. A burning tree can rapidly fill a room with fire and deadly gases.

- Do not place your tree close to a heat source, including a fireplace or heat vent. The heat will dry out the tree, causing it to be more easily ignited by heat, flame or sparks.

- Be careful not to drop or flick cigarette ashes near a tree. Do not put your live tree up too early or leave it up for longer than two weeks. Keep the tree stand filled with water at all times.

- Never put tree branches or needles in a fireplace or wood-burning stove. When the tree becomes dry, discard it promptly. The best way to dispose of your tree is by taking it to a recycling center or having it hauled away by a community pick-up service.

Holiday Lights

Inspect holiday lights each year for frayed wires, bare spots, gaps in the insulation, broken or cracked sockets, and excessive kinking or wear before putting them up.

- Use only lighting listed by an approved

testing laboratory.

- Do not link more than three light strands, unless the directions indicate it is safe.

- Connect strings of lights to an extension cord before plugging the cord into the outlet. Make sure to periodically check the wires - they should not be warm to the touch.

- Do not leave holiday lights on unattended.

Holiday Decorations

All decorations should be nonflammable or flame-retardant and placed away from heat vents.

- Never put wrapping paper in a fireplace. It can throw off dangerous sparks and produce a chemical buildup in the home that could cause an explosion.

- If you are using a metallic or artificial tree, make sure it is flame retardant.

Candle Care

If you are using lighted candles, make sure they are in stable holders and place them where they cannot be easily knocked down. Never leave the house with candles burning.

- Never put lit candles on a tree

- Do not go near a holiday tree with an open flame - candles, lighters or matches.

Finally, as in every season, have working smoke alarms installed on every level of your home, test them monthly and keep them clean and equipped with fresh batteries at all times. Know when and how to call for help. And remember to practice your home escape plan.

<http://www.usfa.fema.gov/safety/tips/holiday.shtm>



carteret-craven electric cooperative

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On the Web

www.carteretcravenelectric.coop