

MEMBER News

From Cedar Island to Cedar point
and many places in between

A newsletter for members of Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative

October 2005



Mississippi bound!

Soon after Hurricane Katrina plowed into the Gulf States, a crew from Carteret-Craven was on its way to help restore power for members of Southern Pine Electric Power Association in Mississippi.

At left, Doug Hughes, Josh Quinn and Paul Quillen load up supplies to help them survive on their own for several days. At right, fearing their fuel might be stolen, a couple of clever linemen stenciled these words on a diesel tank they hauled to Mississippi.



Planning assures safe, reliable service

As a Touchstone Energy® cooperative, Carteret-Craven pledges to provide reliable, customer-focused service to all its members, and planning is a key component of that commitment.

Planning assures efficient and effective operation throughout the cooperative, from member services to engineering and operations, from forecasting electricity needs to buying office supplies.

"Our plans are living, breathing documents," said

CEO Craig Conrad. "They are
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Lonnie Moore, CCEC vice-president of engineering & operations, and Jake Joplin, director of staking & engineering services, look over work plans.

on the web

Signup for PowerPay 24 for online bill paying and account maintenance.

Go to:
www.carteretcravenelectric.coop



Choosing when to call or going online can save time

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.

As part of the cooperative's strategic planning this year, we are looking at updating our phone system to better meet the needs of our members and employees. We pride ourselves with 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 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.



Cheryl Slater
Manager,
Customer Services

Many questions can be answered on our Website: www.carteretcravenelectric.coop. If you just need to pay your bill, you can go to the Website and sign up for PowerPay 24.

PowerPay 24 is convenient for our members who pay by e-check or credit card each month. By going online, you can key in your account information and pay right away. You will immediately see confirmation of your payment.

Our online account enhancements offer a secure environment, whether you are paying a bill, checking your account or requesting other services.

You can use PowerPay 24 to view your account, including bill history, usage and payments.

When you sign up for PowerPay 24, you will be notified by e-mail when your bill has been posted. You will continue to receive your bill statements by mail and can still choose your payment method.



Customer Service Rep Phyllis Daniels talks to a member during a peak call period at CCEC.

Change your clock; change your battery



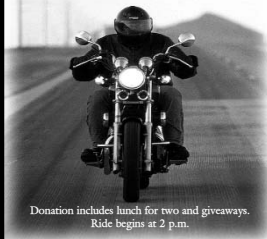
When you change your clocks on Oct. 31 for Daylight Saving Time, remember to change the batteries in your smoke detectors. Smoke detectors are the first line of defense against deadly fires and can double your chances of survival.

Battery-powered smoke detectors should be checked at least once a month and should get new batteries every six months. The Daylight Saving Time changes in the fall and spring are good reminders that it's time to replace the battery.

Jerry Garner Memorial Motorcycle Rally Oct. 15, 2005 TO BENEFIT RELAY FOR LIFE

The ride will begin and end at Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative on Highway 24 west of Morehead City, traveling along Bogue Banks from Emerald Isle to Atlantic Beach, and back along the mainland via Highway 70 and Highway 24.

Registration: 1 to 2 p.m.
Pre-registration: \$15 Day of ride: \$20



Donation includes lunch for two and giveaways.
Ride begins at 2 p.m.

Online Registration: www.carteretcravenelectric.coop

For information: E-mail: info@ccemc.com * Phone: 252.727.2296 or 1.800.682.2217
Sponsored by the Relay for Life team at Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative

Rally to honor lineman, raise funds for cooperative's Relay for Life team

The cooperative's Relay for Life team will sponsor a motorcycle ride in honor of veteran line crew supervisor Jerry Garner, who died in January. He was a 26-year veteran of the co-op.

The ride will begin and end at Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative's main office on Highway 24 west of Morehead City, traveling along Bogue Banks from Emerald Isle to Atlantic Beach, and back along the mainland via Highway 70 and Highway 24.

Registration will be held from 1 to 2 p.m. Pre-registration is \$15; day of the ride, \$20. Donations include lunch for two and giveaways. Register online at www.carteretcravenelectric.coop.

Planning

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reviewed frequently, adjusted as needed and serve to drive our day-to-day activities."

Our strategic plan addresses the cooperative's longer-term needs. A planning team from all departments and all levels of the organization created the outline for that plan, and committees are continuing to develop specific activities from that framework. Under the umbrella of that plan are budgets and work plans, financial plans, construction plans, load forecasting, storm preparation and restoration plans, information system recovery protocols, marketing and communications plans and more.

Extensive planning, for example, goes into selecting a variety of suppliers with diverse fuels used for power generation so we are less vulnerable to individual fuel market fluctuations. We also select both long and short term power purchasing contracts, which helps provide more stable costs to our members.

Planning several years ago brought the development of a comprehensive call center to improve customer service by having fewer call transfers. Today, we are addressing the need to update our phone system to serve our members better. And, planning has led to the

development and continued upgrading of our Website and the development of online bill-paying and account information via PowerPay 24.

Another example is the cooperative's recently completed comprehensive information technology (IT) recovery plan, which will help defend our computers, radios, cell phones and other systems from a variety of threats, as well as shorten IT recovery time, reduce downtime costs and minimize potential damage and data loss from various computer and computer-related systems if disaster strikes.

Our engineering and operations department has an overall 20-year plan, but updates it every four years to keep pace with shorter-term projected growth.

"None of these plans work in isolation, just as no department can work independent of any other department in the cooperative," Conrad said. "Like the transmission lines, substations, power lines and other components that bring you service, the cooperative's employees work together to provide you reliable power and the best customer service. That is our commitment, and we take it very seriously."

Ease winter heating costs by being proactive

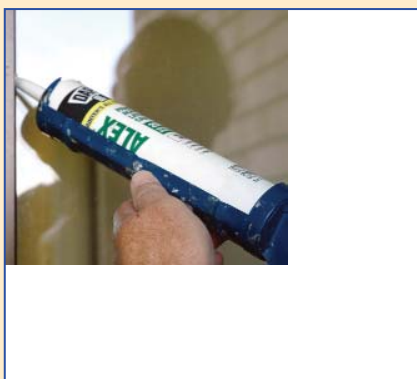
Even with the volatile energy market, you can take some steps now to make sure you get the most out of your energy dollars this winter.

"While we can't control the energy market, there are measures we can take now to lower our home energy use during the cold weather," said CCEC Marketing Specialist Richard Tuttle. "You don't have to feel totally helpless in these uncertain times."

Be proactive now, while the weather is still moderate, and save yourself the worry when winter weather arrives.

Have a professional check out your heating system to ensure it is operating at peak efficiency. This should include an inspection of heat pump coils to determine if they need to be cleaned and inspection of duct work to insure proper delivery of the conditioned air.

Test your windows and doors for airtightness. Do a visual inspection to identify obvious leaks first. If you can see daylight around your windows and doors, these are critical



Caulking around windows with air leaks is just one way you can make your winter heating bill a little lower.

areas that should be addressed immediately. Caulk and weather-strip doors and windows with air leaks. Then concentrate on finding smaller air leaks by taking your hand, a candle, or tissue and moving it around win-

dows and doors.

Look for other air leaks where plumbing or electrical wiring goes through walls, floors and ceilings. Check for drafts from outlets, around ceiling fixtures and at attic openings. Seal cracks or holes.

Once cold weather arrives, you can save money by learning to use your thermostat correctly.

"It's a mistake to think you can warm your house faster by setting your thermostat higher," Tuttle said. "Moving your thermostat several degrees higher at once can activate the heat strips in your heat pump, and they cost more to operate."

You can get an idea of how much energy you are using before your bill arrives by reading your meter once a week or so, Tuttle said. "Tracking your usage can also help identify malfunctions that might be occurring with equipment in your home and allow you to take preemptive measures," he said.

Seasonal residents should also prepare. Keep in mind, "no occupancy" doesn't guarantee "no usage."

If you have a heat pump, set the thermostat at the lowest setting possible to protect your home from damage from freezing weather. Some electric baseboard heating units with a "low" or "no heat" setting will still operate when it gets cold enough—usually in the 40- to 50-degree range.

If you leave your water heater on, turn it to its lowest setting. Turn your refrigerator to the most economical setting.

"Even if your bills are higher during winter despite your best efforts at conservation, electricity is still one of the best values around," Tuttle said.



carteret-craven electric cooperative

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On the Web

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