

MEMBER

*From Cedar Island to Cedar Point
and many places in between*

News

A newsletter for members of Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative

June 2006



Summer-ize your energy use for savings

Escalating gasoline prices have many of us feeling helpless to control energy costs. You do, however, have significant control over your electricity bill and can bring it down by controlling your usage.

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 for 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.

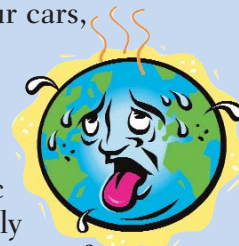
How will you know if your conservation efforts are making a difference?

Note your meter reading each day to track your usage. 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. Your bill gives you that information and more.

If more people were aware 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.

Electricity is still a value, Zajac said. The price you pay for lunch at your favorite restaurant would buy enough electricity to power the average home for one day.



on the web

Want to better understand your electric bill?

Go to:

www.carteretcravenelectric.coop



carteret-craven electric cooperative

inside-out



Mapping Specialist Diane Puca, left, prints out a working diagram from the computer-generated map, above, for a new subdivision project.

Mapping model keeps track of co-op system

Carteret-Craven's state-of-the-art mapping system is the skeleton drawing of our entire transmission and distribution operation and contains a wealth of data available at the touch of a few computer keys.

Mapping Specialist Diane Puca keeps some 450 maps up to date, adding new services, updating any changes to equipment or existing services, creating skeleton maps for construction projects, providing system inventory data and consumer information and developing specialized maps for a variety of needs.

In recent years, the growth in our service territory has kept staff very busy.

We maintained around 35,000 individual services on our mapping system for a long time, Puca said. In the last year or two, we have grown tremendously and now have close to 38,000 services.

System maps detail more

than 27,000 poles, 3,500 underground transformers, 8,000 overhead transformers and all the equipment that goes with that.

The mapping system provides models of our entire system, from a single safeguard light to the engineering specifications for our substations, Puca said. It is a one-stop source for a wealth of information.

Not too many years ago, the mapping information was sent to a private company for printing, which was a lengthy and costly process. For field work, those paper maps were carried on the cooperative trucks. Today, the maps are updated far more regularly, and can be accessed through laptops in the vehicles and on computers used by other employees who need to view them.

For instance, Director of Engineering Services Jake Joplin uses the engineering map model to predict and

plan future system load growth. The maps also are integrated with our Customer Information System (CIS), which allows us to access member-specific information to answer questions or solve problems.

The information is very detailed and is kept accurate by a computerized analysis and error-checking system, Puca said.

Additionally, system inspectors contracted by the cooperative check a fifth of the transmission and distribution system each year to ensure our system integrity. The mapping information is checked against the inspectors' data and updated for even further accuracy.

The cooperative hopes to integrate the mapping system with county tax maps and GPS data soon.

We have a sound, highly rated system, and are now on the doorstep of an even more state-of-the-art system, Puca said.

Capital credits allocated to members

One thing that makes cooperatives unique in the business world is the capital credit program, which returns to member-owners the profits, or margins, that the cooperative earned above 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 allocated to members' accounts based on individ-

ual usage for that year. After a certain period, a general retirement takes place, and the funds are returned to the members.

In March 2006, \$1,128,474 in capital credits was set aside, or allocated, for 2005.

If you would like to know the approximate value of your 2005 allocation you need to know the total of the billings from the cooperative last year and multiply that figure by .0223524.

For example, if you paid

\$1,500 in 2005, then your capital credits would come to \$20.10. If you have multiple accounts, you will get an allocation for each active account.

You can view your 2005 bill history on the Web through PowerPay 24 at www.carteretcravenelectric.coop.

If you have any questions about this allocation or capital credits in general, ask for our accounting department when you call Linda Harrell at 727-2233.

Who doesn't want a simpler life?

We know you value your time, particularly your vacation time.

If you are planning to be away from home this summer and don't want to return to a pile of bills, the cooperative has ways to make at least one of them disappear from the stack: Automatic Bank Draft and PowerPay 24.

With Automatic Bank Draft, we draft your monthly electric payment from your checking or savings account on a specified draft date.

If you add the co-ops' Equalizer Payment Plan, you don't have to guess how much will be taken out each month. Your monthly electric bills are totaled for the year and then divided into 12 equal payments.

Just contact us and we'll send you the information you need to get started. All we'll need from you is an authorization form signed and a deposit slip from your checking account. It's that simple.

If that doesn't suit your needs, you can sign up for PowerPay 24, our online bill view and payment option. You can check

your account and pay your bill even when you are away.

To sign up for PowerPay or for more information and requests for Automatic Bank Draft or the Equalizer Payment Plan, visit us on the Web at www.carteretcravenelectric.coop.

Who doesn't want a simpler life?

'I'm free!'

Who doesn't want a simpler life?

- ✓ With our Automatic Bank Draft and Equalizer Payment programs, you can make paying your electric bill worry-free.
- ✓ Your account will be drafted the same amount, the same date each month.

You can quit worrying about due dates, writing checks or being unable to pay while you're away from home.

Automatic Bank Draft
We draft your monthly electric payment from your checking or savings account on a specified draft date.

Equalizer Payment Plan
Your monthly electric bills are totaled for the year and then divided into 12 equal payments. You know exactly what your electric bill will be each month. For new accounts, we estimate monthly usage.

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Safety on the water: boats, power lines & lightning

If you're enjoying a day of boating, you should never assume your boat's mast, antenna, or other equipment will clear an overhead power line even if you've traveled under it before. The tide and boat drafts change.

On the water, overhead power lines sometimes are nearly invisible. A miscalculation can be fatal. When you're moving around a harbor or moving a boat on land, know where overhead power lines are. Never let any part of your mast, aerial or craft get closer than 10 feet away from any line. That's not only good boating safety, it is good sense.

Summer also brings thunderstorms to

our area, and sometimes it seems they come out of nowhere. Today's small fiberglass boats, especially sailboats, are particularly vulnerable to lightning strikes since anything above the water surface acts as a potential lightning rod.



Be wary of dark threatening clouds or a steady increase in wind or sea swell. Heavy static on your AM radio may be an indication of nearby thunderstorm activity. If a thunderstorm is approaching, head for shore if possible. Put on

your personal flotation device and prepare for rough seas. Get out of your boat and away from the water. Find shelter immediately.

March of Dimes team publishes cookbook



CCEC's March of Dimes fund-raising team has published a cookbook filled with more than 250 recipes, from awesome appetizers to sumptuous seafood fare.

CCEC employees and friends contributed their taste-tested and time-tested recipes for the cookbook.

"One of the nice things about the cookbook is that it not only has wonderful recipes, but it also was designed to

be a treasured keepsake," said Sue Matthews, chairman of the cooperative's March of Dimes team and grandmother of a now 5-year-old who was three months premature and suffers from cerebral palsy.

"Many of these recipes have been passed down from generation to generation, and that makes the book even more meaningful."

The cookbooks are available for \$12 each or \$10 each for two or more at the cooperative's offices at 1300 Highway 24, Newport, and 450 McCotter Boulevard, Havelock.



Touchstone Energy

carteret-craven electric cooperative

Offices

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