

NEWS



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Managing Energy Use During COVID-19

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Manager's Message: **Strength, Unity and Stability in the Face of Challenge**

J. Michael Davis
General Manager



As our state, nation and world have taken extraordinary measures to stop the COVID-19 pandemic, I am proud of the unity, resolve and strength of the shared response in our community. We are in this together, and by working together, we will overcome these challenges and find new ways to take care of each other during this critical time.

As your local power partner and as a part of your community, Tri-County EMC is committed to providing the high-quality electric service and support that you count on. We know that after a sufficient supply of food and water, electricity is the No. 1 thing you need to maintain some sense of normalcy as we hunker down in our homes.

Our communities have not been spared the negative impacts of lost wages, school closures and scaled-back commerce. To ease this burden, we are committed to working closely with members facing financial hardship by waiving late fee payments and suspending disconnects. Please remember that electric bills are not being waived, the suspension allows you more time to pay your bill without

being disconnected or being charged a late fee. Members are encouraged to pay at least a portion of their bill as they are able. Taking this simple step can help avoid a large multi-month balance when COVID-19 is behind us.

Tri-County EMC has several programs in place to make managing your energy use and budget easier, such as prepaid billing that allows you to make payments when you can, as you use energy. We also offer the Home Energy Advisor Tool that allows members to see exactly where energy dollars are spent. If you haven't explored these options before, we encourage you to see if they are a good fit for your needs.

Just as you have made changes at home, we have also taken proactive steps during this emergency to protect our members, communities and employees and ensure that there is no disruption to our operations or services. On March 18, we closed our lobby to walk-in traffic to prevent the spread of germs and encouraged members to conduct business with the cooperative remotely through our drop-box, drive-thru, online, mobile app or phone.

Our field personnel have implemented physical distancing practices as they persist in their steadfast efforts to maintain our critical infrastructure. Equally as important, we have coordinated with suppliers and partners to safeguard access to necessary components, materials and support resources. To ensure the power you need is always available, we are in constant coordination with our wholesale power supplier to keep our grid secure and efficient.

As I write this column in March, much of the impact of COVID-19 remains to be seen. Rest assured that as the situation evolves, we will continue to engage with local emergency management officials and follow the guidance of experts to adjust our response to best support your needs.

We are grateful to be a part of your community and honored to provide electricity and services that power your life. While working together to relieve the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic, Tri-County EMC is here for you, just as we always have been, and always will be. We look forward to continuing to work together to meet our challenges with strength, determination and unity.

Postponed: 10th Annual Tri-County EMC Scholarship Golf Tournament

Out of caution for your health and safety, Tri-County EMC employees have postponed the 10th Annual Scholarship Golf Tournament until September 18, 2020. Due to the outbreak of COVID-19, we are following the guidelines of North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services to slow the spread and cancel events with large gatherings of individuals. Tri-County EMC would like to thank the individuals and businesses for their continued support over the years and look forward to a successful event in September!



REMINDER!

Design our Bag Challenge Submissions End May 11!

CONTEST CRITERIA

- Open to students grades Pre-K-12.
- Students must live or attend a school in Tri-County EMC service area.
- Theme of design should be related to Tri-County EMC and must be your own original, unpublished work.
- Designs with the most likes at 12 p.m. on June 14 will be chosen as the winner.
- Include your name, parents name, age, grade, school, address and phone number with your submission.

CONTEST TIMELINE

April 20: Contest opens.

May 11: Submission deadline. After the closing date for submissions, on May 11 at 5 p.m., ten (10) finalists will be selected.

May 18: If your design is selected as a finalist, it will be posted on Tri-County EMC's Facebook page members/community will vote for the winning designs.

May 22: Deadline for voting on Facebook at 12 p.m.

Mail Artwork to: Tri-County EMC Design Bag Challenge, Tri-County EMC, PO BOX 130, Dudley, NC 28333

If you have questions, you may contact Deidra Grantham, manager of Marketing and Communications, at 919-735-2611 ext. 621 or Deidra.Grantham@tcemc.com

Let's Stay Connected!

Although our lobby is closed to protect the safety of our members and employees, we continue to serve our members by providing support whenever needed. As always, we are here for you.

For more information on how to stay connected, visit tcemc.com or call 919-735-2611

Tri-County Electric Membership Corporation
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Icons: Mail, Phone, Website, E-mail, Mobile, Text, Drive-Thru



Holiday Closing

Tri-County EMC will be closed on Monday, May 25, 2020, in observance of Memorial Day.

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 tcemc.com.

You may choose to call the numbers listed below to pay by phone. To report a loss of power or an emergency, please call 1-800-548-4869 or 919-735-2611.

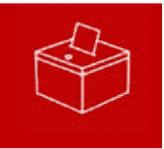
Payment Options *Made Easy* for YOU!

We have several different convenient payment options available for our members. We realize one method of payment does not fit every member's need, so we made multiple options for you to choose what works best for you.



MAIL

Tri-County EMC's monthly bill comes complete with a return envelope that you can insert your check and mail to us at: PO BOX 130 Dudley, NC 28333. *Payments must be received in our office on or prior to the due date. WE DO NOT use the mailing post date.*



DROP BOX

A drop box is available for your convenience outside of our main entrance near our drive-thru window. Payments placed in the box Monday-Friday are posted same business day, payments placed on the weekend will be posted on Monday. PLEASE DO NOT PUT CASH IN THE DROP BOX.



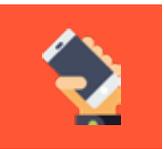
PHONE

Members can call 919-735-2611 or 800-548-4869 and pay over the phone 24/7 with a credit/debit card or check. We recommend members use their account number when calling to ensure accuracy.



ONLINE

Online bill pay is available 24/7 365 days a year. Visit www.tcemc.com, click "my energy account" tab, select "pay your bill online" to make secure payment through our online customer portal.



MOBILE APP

To make payments through our mobile app, Search Tri-County EMC in the App Store or in the Play Store. Our app is free and available to all members.



PrePay

Prepay is a self-managed pay-as-you go billing plan with no deposits or late fees. You can pay as much or as little as you want (\$20 minimum) on an as-needed basis. Each day your balance is adjusted based on how much electricity you used the previous day. A minimum of \$105 (\$100 credit to your account, \$5 membership fee) must be added to your account to begin electric service.



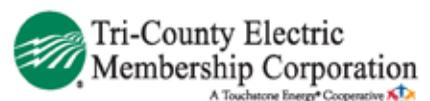
Budget Billing

This payment option allows members to pay the same amount each month. Payments are set at your 12-month average, making it easy to budget. An accurate 12-month history of your current residence electric use determines your payments. This average and billing amount is updated each year based on the previous year's average electricity use.



Auto Pay

With Auto Pay, your electric bill can be automatically withdrawn from a bank account or credit/debit card each month on the selected date of your choice before the bill is due. Sign up for Auto pay and let us do the work for you!



Tips for Managing Energy Use during COVID-19

As American families and businesses transition to remote-work, they may see a surge in home energy use—and in upcoming electric bills. Simple money-saving steps can help lower monthly electric bills without jeopardizing safety or comfort.

“America’s electric cooperatives understand the increased financial hardships facing families and businesses due to the economic impact of COVID-19,” said Mike Davis, general manager of Tri-County EMC. “While many electric cooperatives have suspended disconnections for non-payment and are waiving late fees, consumers will still be responsible for those bills when the pandemic has passed. It’s important for families to be mindful of their energy use and consider adjusting certain habits to avoid higher costs later on.” Recommended energy-saving tips include:

- **Program your thermostat to maximize energy savings.** Setting your thermostat one degree lower when heating or one degree higher when cooling can reduce energy use by up to 5 percent.
- **Do full loads of laundry and wash with cold water.** Using warm water instead of hot can cut a load’s energy use in half, and using cold water will save even more.



- **Air dry dishes.** This step can cut your dishwasher’s energy use by up to 50 percent.
- **Substitute LEDs for conventional light bulbs.** Lighting can amount to up to 12% of monthly energy use. LED bulbs can cut lighting costs by 75%.
- **Unplug appliances and electronics when not in use.** Small appliances and electronics use energy even when not in use. When powered on, game consoles, televisions and similar electronics are responsible for up to 12 percent of energy use.

Tri-County EMC members who have questions about their energy bills should email customerservice@tcemc.com or call 919-735-2611.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month:

When the weather is nice, put your grill to use! During summer months, cooking outdoors is a great way to save energy and eliminate unwanted heat from cooking indoors.



Tri-County EMC Membership Corporation in Dudley, N.C., was chartered May 8, 1940.

Mission Statement:

Tri-County Electric Membership Corporation is a member-driven cooperative committed to providing reliable electric power at a reasonable cost, to offering superior service, and to taking an active role in supporting the communities it serves.

We are here to serve you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year.

For Outages or Emergencies:
919-735-2611 or 1-800-548-4869

tcemc.com

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General Manager

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Patrick Lynch
Randy McCullen

Worth Overman
Brandy Rouse

Employee of the month



Jeff Kennedy

Jeff Kennedy is one of 47 employees ready to serve you. He has worked with Tri-County EMC since Jan. 2, 1992, and is a foreman for the cooperative. Jeff and his wife, Joy, live in Grantham.