

NEWS



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Manager's Message: **Your Electric Cooperative and Community**

J. Michael Davis
 General Manager



Over the years, you've probably heard or read about Tri-County EMC's concern for our community. This is one of the core principles that sets cooperatives apart from other types of utilities and businesses. We've always taken this mission and responsibility to heart. It's who we are as a co-op.

Over the past year, like so many of you, we've risen to meet new challenges and strengthen the safety net for our community, particularly for those who are most vulnerable. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, we've made numerous adjustments to programs and operations to maintain business continuity while staying focused on the bigger mission of helping our consumer-members during this turbulent time.

Now, with the holiday season upon us and the New Year just around the corner, these recent events have made me pause

and think about the role we play in our community and the gratitude I feel for our community. While our purpose is to provide safe and reliable energy to you, the members we serve, we have a greater mission – to be a catalyst for good.

You're probably aware of our Operation Round-Up program, where we take donations from generous members like you who have "rounded up" the amount due on their electric bill to help our most vulnerable neighbors pay their bills. Or our Youth Tour program, where we take our community's brightest young people to Washington, D.C., for a week-long immersion to experience democracy in action.

We also have a strong commitment to safety—not just for our employees, but for our community as well. We visit schools to teach children of all ages how to stay safe around electricity. We hold safety demonstrations at community meetings and other gatherings.

You'll also see our employees serving on local boards, coaching youth sports, and volunteering at charitable events. Because when you work at a co-op, you understand how important a strong community is—after all, without you, the co-op wouldn't exist.

We know that our core job is to keep the lights on; but our passion is our community. Because we live and work here too, and we want to make it a better place for all.

If there's anything we can do to help you—whether providing energy-saving advice to help lower your monthly bill or discuss payment plan options during these difficult times—please reach out to us.

Concern for community is the heart and soul of who we are. And no matter what the future brings, you can count on your electric co-op to care about you.

Four Ways Santa Saves Energy in His Workshop

1 Santa leaves his decorations up year-round, so by using LED holiday light strands, he's able to save on his monthly energy bills. LED holiday strands can last up to 40 seasons, which make them a great option for any festive home.

2 Santa requires several power tools to make a year's worth of new toys. That's why he insists on using cordless power tools with the ENERGY STAR rating. According to energystar.gov, if all power tools in the U.S. used ENERGY STAR-rated battery chargers, 2 billion kWh hours of electricity could be saved—that's equivalent to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 1.7 million tons!

3 Mrs. Claus loves to keep warm by the fire in the evenings, and Santa knows one of the best tricks to ensure fireplace efficiency. While a fireplace can keep a small area of your home cozy and warm, it can also pull heated air from the room through the chimney. That's why Santa always closes the fireplace flue when a fire isn't burning.

4 Santa also saves energy by using power strips. Power strips are ideal for workshops, craft nooks, game rooms and other spaces in your home. With one simple switch, you can conveniently control several devices and electronics that are plugged into the power strip.



With these four tips, you'll be well on your way to savings (and hopefully, Santa's "nice" list!).

Tri-County EMC Awards Grants to Educators for Bright Ideas

Tri-County EMC awarded \$62,483.34 in Bright Ideas education grants to 81 educators to fund engaging classroom learning projects. Thousands of students at schools in Duplin, Wayne and Lenoir will participate in Bright Ideas projects funded by Tri-County EMC this year.

“This year’s grant applications were fun and uniquely creative to help students learn remotely and in the classroom,” said Deidra Grantham, manager of marketing and communications of Tri-County EMC. “Typically, these grants bring creative projects to life inside classrooms. However, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Tri-County EMC has been

flexible with the types of projects awarded to ensure that all students are able to benefit, whether they are in the classroom or learning remotely,” said Grantham.

In addition to awarding teachers, Tri-County EMC also granted \$500 to Kenansville Elementary, Northwest Elementary and Pink Hill Elementary for having the greatest number of bright ideas winners in their individual counties.

Since the Bright Ideas grant program began in 1994, Tri-County EMC has contributed \$1,685,743.81 to fund 1,874 creative projects to local teachers.

Bright Ideas grant applications are collected each year through mid-September, and winning proposals are selected in a competitive evaluation



process by a panel of judges. The application process will reopen for interested teachers in April 2021.

To find out more information about the Bright Ideas grant program, visit tcemc.com or the Bright Ideas website at ncbrightideas.com. Become a fan of “Bright Ideas Education” on Facebook to receive regularly updated news about the program.

The following is the list of this year’s winning teachers, along with their school:

Tera Kennedy.....	B F Grady Elementary	Katherine Sowers.....	LaGrange Elementary	Jean Turner.....	Pink Hill Elementary
Terry Smith.....	B F Grady Elementary	Lisa H Davis.....	LaGrange Elementary	Johan Mari-Aviles.....	Pink Hill Elementary
Catherine Huff.....	Banks Elementary	Catherine Lynch.....	Moss Hill Elementary	Julie Rouse.....	Pink Hill Elementary
Jennifer Jones.....	Banks Elementary	Kelly Nelson.....	Moss Hill Elementary	Lakresha Walston.....	Pink Hill Elementary
Olivia Parrish.....	Banks Elementary	Lindsay H Howard.....	Moss Hill Elementary	Leigh Anne Hall.....	Pink Hill Elementary
Regan Bennett.....	Banks Elementary	Meredith Sanderson.....	Moss Hill Elementary	Megan Lawson.....	Pink Hill Elementary
Weil Sawyer.....	Banks Elementary	Molly Barwick.....	Moss Hill Elementary	Selina Gray.....	Pink Hill Elementary
Chadwick Stokes.....	E B Frink Middle	Wesley T Letchworth.....	Moss Hill Elementary	Stephanie Kollock.....	Pink Hill Elementary
Christopher Cotter.....	E B Frink Middle	Gail Rena Mason.....	Mount Olive Middle	Lindsey Lee.....	Pink Hill Elementary
Daniel Krentz.....	E B Frink Middle	Valerie Blokland.....	Mount Olive Middle	Heather West.....	South Lenoir High
Jonathan Smith.....	E B Frink Middle	Becky Kerns.....	North Duplin Elementary	Heaven Tyndall.....	South Lenoir High
Joy Sutton.....	E B Frink Middle	Jenny Sasser.....	North Duplin Elementary	Ryan C Gardner.....	South Lenoir High
Kristen Davenport.....	E B Frink Middle	Harley Smith.....	North Lenoir High	Sarah York.....	South Lenoir High
Pamela S Pate.....	E B Frink Middle	Kim H Hipkiss.....	North Lenoir High	Julie Slye.....	Spring Creek Middle
Sandra M West.....	E B Frink Middle	Stephanie Harrell.....	North Lenoir High	Crystal Hodges.....	Tommys Road Elementary
Amber Sauls.....	Fremont Elementary	Belinda Curatolo.....	Northwest Elementary	Casey Stephens-Chudy.....	Wayne Country Day School
Rebecca Jones.....	Grantham Elementary	Catherine M Borgquist.....	Northwest Elementary	Catherine G Hooks.....	Wayne Country Day School
Merriann Hielt.....	Grantham Middle	Megan Rizzo.....	Northwest Elementary	Dona Briggs.....	Wayne Country Day School
Regina Kilpatrick.....	Kenansville Elementary	Sherri Fortner.....	Northwest Elementary	Rob Glass.....	Wayne Country Day School
Robin Mewborn.....	Kenansville Elementary	Brittany Murray.....	Northwest Elementary	Jeffrey Wilson.....	Woodington Middle
Robyn Sutton.....	Kenansville Elementary	Doris M Newton.....	Northwest Elementary	Jessica L. Jones.....	Woodington Middle
Alicia Davis.....	LaGrange Elementary	Tiffany Bowser.....	Northwest Elementary	Majesty McPhail.....	Woodington Middle
Deborah Casey.....	LaGrange Elementary	Lanelle Sutton.....	Norwayne Middle	Tony Kopanski.....	Woodington Middle
Emily Daniels.....	LaGrange Elementary	Allison Whitfield.....	Pink Hill Elementary	Zachary Daniel Wills.....	Woodington Middle
Gwen Smith.....	LaGrange Elementary	Amy Taylor.....	Pink Hill Elementary	Melissa Perritt.....	Woodington Middle
Jennifer H. Sutton.....	LaGrange Elementary	Brenda Griffin.....	Pink Hill Elementary	Austin Ty Kennedy.....	Woodington Middle
Kara Rouse.....	LaGrange Elementary	Jami L Finch.....	Pink Hill Elementary	Adam Pike.....	Woodington Middle



Office Closed for Holidays

Tri-County EMC will be closed on December 24 and December 25 to celebrate the Christmas holiday; and January 1 for the New Year!

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.

The perfect Christmas gift for anyone: **ChristmasWatts**

Each year Tri-County Electric Membership offers the ChristmasWatts program for its members. ChristmasWatts is a gift that anyone can use and what could be more practical than helping someone pay their electric bill during the holiday season?

When you give Christmas Watts, you are purchasing kilowatt hours of electricity for someone you love or care for and reducing the amount of next month's electric bill for the person you select. The amount of ChristmasWatts purchased will be credited to the electric bill of the selected person.

To purchase Christmas Watts, complete the request form below, clip and mail the form

with your check, money order or credit card information to Tri-County EMC. You may also purchase ChristmasWatts by stopping by our office located on Highway 117 Alternate in Dudley. Credit card orders may also be placed by calling 919-735-2611 or 800-548-4869. Additional request forms may be obtained by calling the above numbers.

Request must be received by December 18, 2020.

Order your ChristmasWatts today and make the holiday season brighter and warmer for someone special!!!

CHRISTMASWATTS REQUEST FORM

I would like to purchase ChristmasWatts in the amount of \$ _____

FOR _____
(Name of Tri-County Member)

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

If possible, please provide account number, meter number or location number _____

Please mark (X) one of the following payment methods

Check enclosed Money Order enclosed Credit Card payment authorization
I wish to pay this with VISA Mastercard

Name on Card _____

Card Number _____ Expiration Date ____/____ Zip Code _____

FROM _____ Telephone Number _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

CLIP OUT this request form and mail with your check, money order, or credit card payment to
ChristmasWatts | Tri-County EMC | PO Box 130 | Dudley, NC 28333



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month:

Energy bills can increase during winter for a variety of reasons, like house guests, more time spent at home, and shorter days and longer nights. Small actions, like turning down your thermostat, replacing old bulbs with LEDs and washing clothes in cold water can help you save.

High School Students

Apply to Spend a Week in Washington, D.C.

Are you a high school junior interested in spending a week in Washington, D.C., learning about government, U.S. history and the cooperative business model, while building your leadership skills and making new friends from across the state and nation? If so, we invite you to apply for the 2020 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour! Tri-County EMC is currently accepting applications from local students to attend the week-long trip June 20–26, 2021.

Youth Tour gives high school students the opportunity to experience Washington, D.C., and learn more about how they can make a difference as young adults. Tourists will pay their respects at historic monuments and memorials, meet with North Carolina's members of Congress on Capitol Hill and tour a variety of Smithsonian museums, all while building a peer network with young leaders from across the country.

Tri-County EMC will sponsor two local students to join North Carolina's delegation on the 2021 trip. The all-expenses paid tour is hosted by electric cooperatives nationwide and is a tradition more than 50 years strong. About 1,800 students from more than 40 states are expected to participate in 2021, with



NC Electric Cooperatives Youth Tour

North Carolina sending approximately 45 students to represent our state's electric cooperatives.

"If you're a high school student who wants to grow as a leader and experience a trip of a lifetime, NC Youth Tour is the perfect opportunity," said Deidra Grantham, manager of communication and public relations of Tri-County EMC. "Youth Tour has something to offer to everyone and can help prepare you for future success on any path you pursue after high school."

Students entering their senior year in Fall 2021 are eligible to attend and are encouraged to apply through Tri-County EMC. Delegates will be selected based on completing an application and writing a short 500-word essay. Applications for Youth Tour are available online at tcemc.com.



Applications are due January 22, 2021.



**Tri-County Electric
Membership Corporation**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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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Brandy Rouse

Employee of the month



..... **Tony Grantham**

Tony Grantham is one of 47 employees ready to serve you. He has worked with Tri-County EMC since December 4, 1989, serving as the Manager of Engineering for the cooperative. Tony and his family reside in Rosewood.