



Marlboro Electric Cooperative, Inc.

254 Hwy 15-401 Bypass East
P.O. Box 1057
Bennettsville, SC 29512

General Information

(843) 479-3855
(800) 922-9174
www.marlborelectric.coop

Office Hours

8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
Monday–Friday

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Co-op News Editor

Christy J. Overstreet
email: cjooverstreet@
marlborelectric.coop

Mission Statement

The aim of Marlboro Electric Cooperative, Inc. is to make electric energy available to its members at the lowest cost consistent with sound economy and good management.



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Co-op power

Keeping it reliable, affordable, environmentally responsible

AT MARLBORO ELECTRIC

Cooperative, we have three top priorities: provide you safe, reliable access to electric power; offer that service as affordably as possible; and do both of those things in a fiscally and environmentally responsible fashion.



Because Marlboro

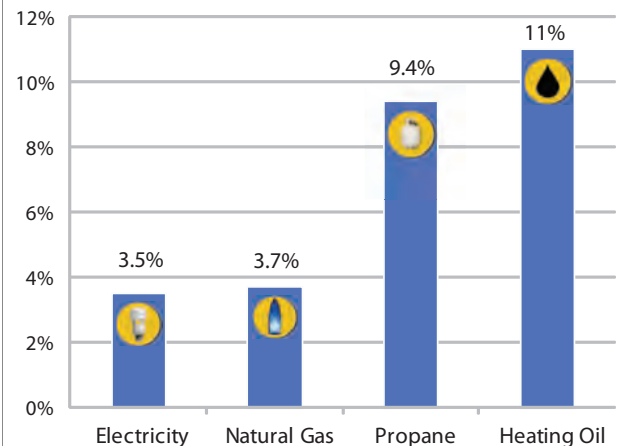
Electric is a not-for-profit enterprise—which means your money stays local; we don't have to worry about distant shareholders—we are well-positioned to make any necessary investments for ensuring safe, reliable, and affordable electricity. However, fulfilling our commitment to environmental stewardship in a fiscally responsible manner has become more challenging. Today, many environmental laws that were adopted by Congress decades ago are being used by federal agencies and the courts to address issues for which they were never intended.

For example, the federal Clean Air Act is now 40 years old and was last amended in 1990—more than two decades ago. Much has changed in the intervening years, including technology, our understanding of the environment, and the electric utility industry.

Today, officials with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency—often under court order—are trying to modify the Clean Air Act to fit new circumstances. Without a doubt, new EPA rules being issued will wind

Electricity prices remain stable

Compared to other types of home heating fuel, electricity prices have remained the most stable over the past 10 years. This graph shows the average annual price increase from 2000 to 2010 for each fuel type.



Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) September 2011 data

up back in the courts—and lengthy litigation will ensue.

Reasonable people can and will disagree over how to find a balance between protecting the environment, guaranteeing a reliable supply of power, and keeping electric bills affordable. Under the right circumstances, Congress eventually will have to revisit the Clean Air Act and update it to fit the needs of the 21st century. In the meantime, Marlboro Electric Cooperative will keep you updated on our efforts to encourage lawmakers and regulators to strike the proper balance on these concerns.

Eddie Gordon

Trustee

Don't forget! See pages 20A–D for more MEC NEWS.

Building a better world

2012 marks the International Year of Cooperatives

IN TODAY'S uncertain economic times, the question quickly comes to mind. We want our children and neighbors to succeed. We need a strong and sustainable community. But how do you build a better world?

History tells us when we band together we can do anything. Together, we can build a better world. That's where cooperatives come into play.

Co-ops are kicking off a year-long celebration marking the International Year of Cooperatives 2012. Our theme, "Cooperative Enterprises Build a Better World," resonates loud and clear in our turbulent national—and global—economy. The year offers a chance for us to showcase our legacy of innovation and achievement and reminds us of what's important in business—putting people first.

Co-ops fill a community need, giving a voice to folks that profit-driven businesses often overlook. Co-ops share a common set of principles and values, including self-help and—one of my favorites—democracy.

Electric cooperatives may only serve 12 percent

of Americans, but our lines cover 75 percent of this great nation. By banding together, we deliver power to 42 million rural Americans in 47 states—and we're not finished.

Through NRECA International Programs, co-op linemen are volunteering overseas to deliver electricity to 2 billion people living without power. Over the last 50 years, these efforts have provided light and hope to 100 million people in more than 40 countries. Recently, more than 100 linemen from South Carolina assisted with restoration in Virginia from Hurricane Irene damage. That's



2012
International
Year of

Cooperatives

how electric cooperatives build a better world.

Whenever a community faces a need—a challenge

to make life better—the cooperative business model comes into play. Co-ops adapt quickly to change, and we work together—cooperatively—to find solutions to improve service for our members.

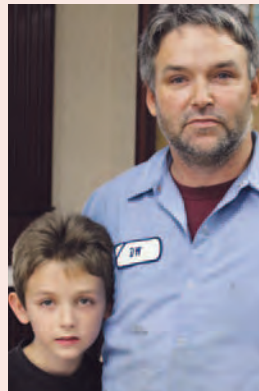
By putting people first and innovating to meet member needs, cooperative enterprises build a better world.

Talk Co-op

Members voice their viewpoint in 2012 International Year of Cooperatives

BY CHRISTY OVERSTREET

WHAT DO YOU like most about being a Marlboro Electric Co-op member?



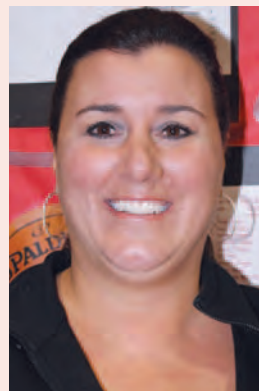
"Marlboro Electric has always treated me fair. I like the Annual Meetings the most because we get door prizes."

—William Webb (son, Hunter)
Bennettsville



"The Customer Service people are so friendly and polite when I come in to pay my bill."

—Queen Thomas
Bennettsville



"The Co-op makes members feel a part of the family, and they know their members. I enjoy reading the SC Living magazine because it pertains to our county and the co-op keeps everyone well-informed in the community."

—Debra Griggs
Bennettsville



"Reliability and response time for service, especially during an outage, have always been good. Everybody's always nice and helpful."

—David Warriax
McColl



Have your money ready at this year's Annual Meeting on Saturday, April 21, to enjoy some delicious food and sweets.

WALTER ALBREDA



News EXTRA

Get a mouthful with WIRE

HOT DOG! Make that with mustard, ketchup, slaw and a little bit of onions on top—that way no one will get too close. Don't forget the chili, too. Yum, yum! And let me buy one of those sweet homemade cupcakes that those thoughtful WIRE ladies baked. They are always so delicious!

WIRE hosts the concessions and sells items at the Annual Meeting each year to raise funds to donate to needy causes in the community as shown in these photos.

If you're into baking yourself, WIRE also sells aprons with the Palmetto tree along with mitts at the

co-op and Annual Meeting.

Local WIRE ladies work hard in their efforts for a better community, and they continue to touch the lives of many people. WIRE is a non-profit community outreach organization that encourages interest in electric programs and works to improve the quality of life in rural areas. Membership is open to all women who are co-op members, trustees, retirees and employees or the spouses of members, trustees and employees. ☺



CHRISTY OVERSTREET

It was a 'Treat' for WIRE members Faye Steen, left, and Frances Smith, right, to distribute candy at the Halloween for the Special event held at the Dillon Comfort Inn, sponsored by the Dillon Chamber of Commerce.



CHRISTY OVERSTREET

WIRE President Gwen Moses, left, and Vice President Frances Smith, right, give the donation to J.S. Watson of the Bread of Life Food Pantry.

Giving to the needy and hungry is WIRE's way of demonstrating what Thanksgiving is all about. Gwen Moses and Frances Smith present a donation to Rev. Scott Andrews for the First Presbyterian Church's Annual Thanksgiving Luncheon to help feed the needy in Marlboro County on Thanksgiving Day. More than 1,000 plates are prepared.

CHRISTY OVERSTREET



WIRE offers \$2,500 scholarship for women

Applications are being taken for a \$2,500 scholarship for women awarded annually by WIRE, a community service organization affiliated with electric co-ops in South Carolina, including Marlboro Electric Cooperative.

The WIRE Opportunity Scholarship is awarded to a woman who may not have been able to attend college when she graduated from high school but now wants to further her education. WIRE (Women Involved in Rural Electrification) awards the scholarship based on financial need and personal goals.

Applicants must:

- ▶ be a member of a South Carolina electric co-op
- ▶ have graduated from high school or earned her GED at least 10 years ago
- ▶ be accepted into an accredited S.C. college or university, and
- ▶ demonstrate financial need.

Women who have previously obtained a four-year college degree are not eligible. Applicants may have previously earned a two-year degree or some college credits. The scholarship, which can be used for the fall 2012 or spring 2013 semesters, will be paid jointly to the winner and their college of choice.

Applications are available at Marlboro Electric Cooperative. The deadline to apply is June 1. Mail or fax the application to WIRE Scholarship Committee, Attention: Christy Overstreet, Marlboro Electric Cooperative, Inc., P.O. Box 1057, Bennettsville, SC 29512; fax (843) 479-8990.



Co-op passes safety inspection

MARLBORO ELECTRIC Cooperative recently passed the rigorous RESAP recertification process that promotes safety while reducing the co-op's insurance costs.

RESAP stands for Rural Electric Safety Accreditation Program, which is administered by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. The co-op earns recertification every three years.

"Being RESAP certified reduces our workers' comp and liability insurance premiums and, more importantly, ensures that we continue to promote safe work practices and policies. This process encompasses all areas of the cooperative and takes a team effort to be successful," said John Powers, Marlboro Electric's safety director.

The inspection team was made up of employees of The Electric Cooperatives of South Carolina, Inc. (ECSC), a statewide trade association, and Marlboro Electric's sister co-ops around the state. Team members inspected the co-op's trucks, warehouse, shop and pole yard. They also walked through the offices, interviewing employees about their knowledge of the nearest fire extinguishers, first-aid stations and emergency exit procedures. Inspectors were then escorted to locations in the field



CHRISTY OVERSTREET

John Powers, safety director of Marlboro Electric, prepares safety programs each month and encourages employees to continue to actively care for the safety of themselves and others.

to evaluate line and construction crews.

The inspection was the second part of the recertification process and followed a detailed application submitted. Observers look to make sure the co-op complies with basic industry safety standards.

Marlboro Electric's President & CEO Bill Fleming said, "This is a testament to the quality of employees that we have and their commitment to working safely. Our number-one objective at Marlboro Electric is to be safe." ☺

STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION

Marlboro Electric Cooperative, Inc. is the recipient of federal financial assistance from the Rural Utilities Service, an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and is subject to the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; as amended, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, and the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. In accordance with federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this organization is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, or disability. The person responsible for coordinating this compliance effort is William L. Fleming, president and chief executive officer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write to: USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call (202) 720-5964 (voice or TDD) or, toll-free, (866) 632-9992 (voice only). Both USDA and Marlboro Electric Cooperative, Inc. are equal opportunity providers and employers.

SC Living Awards

Marlboro Electric received the First Place Excellence Award in 2011 for the annual Local Cooperative News Awards given by the Electric Cooperatives of South Carolina.

South Carolina Living is the co-op's official member magazine that serves as an important communication tool for co-op members each month, reaching about 530,000 co-op consumers across the Palmetto State.

The annual Local Cooperative News Awards help members benefit from high standards which cooperatives apply to their efforts to "tell the cooperative story" in a monthly co-op news section in the center of the magazine. Co-op news sections include local co-op and community news, information about co-op services and programs, and useful information on electrical safety and energy efficiency.

The co-op's local editor is Christy Overstreet, marketing & communications representative, who has worked at Marlboro Electric for 10 years. "It is a wonderful honor to be recognized for the magazine's accomplishments and success," says Overstreet. "We appreciate the support and contributions of co-op employees, Board members, the Electric Cooperatives of South Carolina, co-op members and members of the community."



KIM FOWLER

Christy Overstreet, marketing & communications representative of Marlboro Electric, prepares the local content of the SC Living magazine each month.

How we handle widespread outages

BY **ROBBIE KIRK**,
SUPERINTENDENT
OF OPERATIONS



CHRISTY OVERSTREET

Robbie Kirk

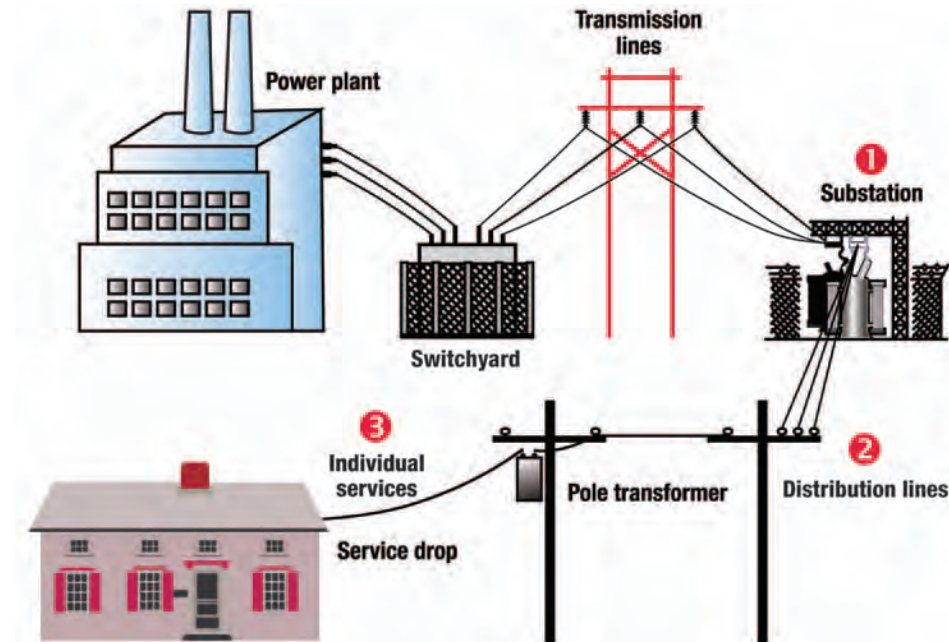
WITH THE WINTER season here, Marlboro Electric Cooperative reminds its members of our service restoration procedure for major, widespread outages.

The co-op follows a plan designed to get the lights back on as soon as possible for the greatest number of members. One key point: If generating plants or transmission lines have been knocked out, our power providers must repair those facilities before we can get your power flowing again. Then we can repair and restore service on our distribution system.

We follow three basic steps:

1—Substations. Co-op substations take power off transmission lines for distribution around the service area. Substation damage must be repaired before co-op lines that send electricity out of the substation will work.

2—Distribution lines. The co-op then repairs damaged distribution lines that carry power from



substations to communities, subdivisions and other groups of member homes.

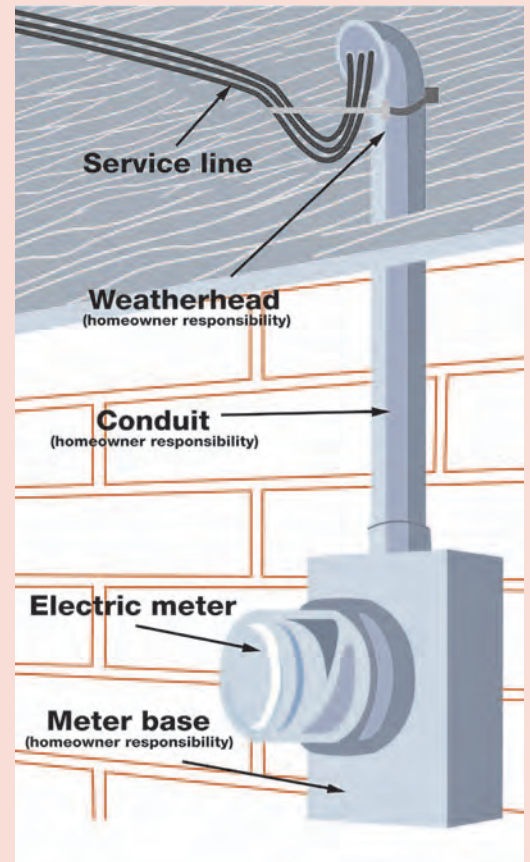
3—Individual services. Focus then shifts to service lines to individual members' homes. If your service line is damaged, you may have no power when your neighbor does. Let us know so we can repair it.

One situation that requires member action before service can be safely restored: If your home's weatherhead, meter base or the conduit above it is damaged, it's your responsibility to have those repaired by a licensed electrician. Then notify us so we can get your power back on. ☺

If your power goes out, call Marlboro Electric, (843) 479-3855. Please make sure we have your correct phone number in our outage management system.

If your service is damaged

If there is damage to the equipment where the service drop enters your home, you may need to get an electrician to repair it before the co-op can safely restore your service. The weatherhead, where service lines enter the conduit leading to your home's electric meter, is the responsibility of the homeowner. So are the conduit and the meter base. The co-op can replace or repair damaged meters or service lines, but if you see damage to your home's weatherhead, conduit or meter base, contact an electrician immediately to get repairs started.





Know what's below before you dig

NO MATTER HOW large or small the digging project is, it is important to “Call Before You Dig” or “Click Before You Dig!” By making a simple FREE phone call or by simply filling out the online form you can protect yourself and your community from costly fines, repairs, personal injury or inconvenient outages.

If you are planning to dig in South Carolina, SC811 should be your first step for safety and damage prevention of underground facilities. SC811 is operated by Palmetto Utility Protection (PUPS), a one-call system to improve community and job safety of contractors, construction personnel and the general

public. Most importantly, SC811 is a statewide family, of which Marlboro Electric is a part, committed to the safety of our community and damage prevention to members, excavators and the public for South Carolina.

The 1978 Underground Utility Damage Prevention Act, SC811, a not-for-profit company, has been working hard for damage prevention and safety for more than 30 years. Anyone proposing to excavate, dig, bore, tunnel, blast, or disturb the earth in any manner in which buried facilities may be damaged is required to call SC811 at 811 or (888) 721-7877 between the hours of 7:30 a.m. (EST) and 5:30 p.m. (EST), Monday through Friday, excluding



Know what's below. Call before you dig.



CHRISTY OVERSTREET

Co-op employees call before digging. Left to right, Randy Alford, Terry Terry, William Penn, James Emanuel and RC Thompson.



member company will then send either one of their employees or a contract locator to your dig site to mark the location of their underground facility lines.

Once the lines have been marked, you may begin carefully to dig, keeping in mind the 2½ feet allowance on either side of the markings. Not all utilities are members with SC811. If a utility is not named, please contact them directly.

Remember to call 811 or (888) 721-7877 or visit sc811.com to request a locate ticket before you dig.

holidays, allowing three working days (72 hours) before starting the proposed work. Emergencies will be processed promptly.

The South Carolina state law requires at least a three-working-day notice (72 hours) excluding weekends and holidays, for the locators to mark the area. An SC811 representative will record the location of the digging site and notify member companies of your intent to dig. Each

Your Annual Meeting date is Saturday, April 21, at the Marlboro County High School

TIME SCHEDULE

ITEM	BYLAW PROVISION	ACTION
Nomination Committee Appointed	Not less than sixty (60) days nor more than ninety (90) days before any meeting of members, consisting of three (3) members	Appointed at January 25, 2012, meeting
Notice of Meeting of Nominating Committee	RUS requirement (No Bylaw Provision)	Posted at Co-op
Posting of Report of Nominating Committee	Co-op procedure	Report posted at Co-op
Credentials and Election Committee Appointed	At least sixty (60) days but no more than ninety (90) days before any meeting of the members, appoint at least five (5)	To be appointed by February 20, 2012
Notice of Meeting	Not less than ten (10) days nor more than twenty-five (25) days before the date of the meeting	To be mailed beginning March 30, 2012