

TIDELAND ELECTRIC MEMBERSHIP CORPORATION

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For Immediate Release:

Friday, March 18, 2011

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Tideland EMC To Distribute 1,285 Seedlings on Arbor Day

PANTEGO, NC – In celebration of North Carolina Arbor Day, Friday, March 18, Tideland Electric Membership Corporation is distributing 1,285 loblolly pine seedlings to fourth graders at sixteen schools in eastern Carolina. Given that trees are the number one cause of power outages, Tideland’s participation in a tree planting program may seem counterproductive. However, the electric co-op hopes that sowing some educational seeds now will lead to long term savings.

“The right tree in the right place benefits everyone,” says Tideland EMC spokeswoman Heidi Jernigan Smith. “Through the Arbor Day seedling program we hope to educate the next generation of consumers about the benefits of trees and how to select a proper planting location to avoid interference with utility equipment.”

Each fourth grader will take home an individually packaged 18 inch seedling sealed in a polybag by workers with disabilities. Each package includes planting and care instructions along with a power line safety message.

North Carolina has nearly 17 million acres of forestland spanning 58 percent of the state’s total land area. Only three states have more commercial forestland. Collectively, this forestland provides clean water and air, wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities. The forest products industry continues to be North Carolina’s second largest manufacturing industry, employing over 118,000 citizens with an annual payroll of \$3.8 billion. There are over 3,000 forest product manufacturing facilities in the state

impacting nearly all 100 counties. When applying an economic multiplier, the total economic benefit of that industry is \$29.7 billion, representing over 312,000 jobs.

Trees are also an important part of energy conservation and when the right tree is planted in the right place it provides shade in summer and acts as a wind break. Wood, including wood waste, is increasingly being utilized as a fuel to generate electric power and is recognized by the US Department of Energy as a renewable energy resource.

The schools participating in the Arbor Day celebration are: Bath Elementary, Chocowinity Primary, John Small Elementary, Northeast Elementary, SW Snowden Elementary, Washington Montessori Charter School, Pungo Christian Academy, Terra Ceia Christian School, Bridgeton Elementary, Mattamuskeet Elementary, Ocracoke School, Arapahoe Charter School, Fred A. Anderson Elementary, Creswell Elementary, Pines Elementary and Manteo Elementary.

Tideland EMC is a member-owned, not-for-profit cooperative serving 22,725 accounts in Beaufort, Hyde, Pamlico, Craven, Washington and Dare counties.

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