

## TIDELAND ELECTRIC MEMBERSHIP CORPORATION

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### Tideland Electric Ready For Tropical Weather

#### For Immediate Release:

Thursday, August 25, 2011

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*Pantego* - Tideland Electric Membership Corporation, with offices in Ocracoke, Engelhard, Grantsboro and Pantego, has activated its emergency response plan in preparation for Hurricane Irene. Based on the Thursday morning forecast, the electric cooperative anticipates debris related outages across a wide swath of its service territory and potential flood damage to utility structures in low lying areas. The co-op will likely face its greatest challenges in Hyde and Dare counties. In addition to its own line crews, Tideland EMC has numerous contractors on standby to assist with repairs.

The first order of business following a major storm is deployment of damage assessment teams. The cooperative also communicates with its power suppliers, Dominion Power and Progress Energy, to ascertain any transmission problems. In the case of Ocracoke, the island's transmission connection travels south along Highway 12 across Oregon Inlet and through Hatteras village and then via submersible cable across Hatteras Inlet. Once initial damage assessments are complete, Tideland EMC crews and contractors repair substations, circuits and then individual power lines in that order. Based on current forecasts, Tideland EMC has no plans to turn off power to any service areas ahead of the storm. In the event of an outage, restoration activities will not begin until the storm has passed to ensure safe working conditions for utility crews. Individuals who depend on electrically powered medical equipment are advised to seek shelter at facilities with emergency generators.

Tideland EMC reminds all consumers that back-up generators can be deadly when not properly operated. Never hook a generator to household wiring without a

properly installed double pole, double throw transfer switch. Never refuel a generator when the engine is running and allow the unit to cool before adding gas. To avoid electrocution or carbon-monoxide poisoning, ground the generator properly and operate in a dry, well ventilated area. Finally, avoid plugging damaged, undersized or ungrounded extension cords into any generator.

During a wind event, it is not unusual for the consumer owned meter base to be damaged, especially when the utility service entrance is located overhead. Power cannot be restored to the location until the consumer has made the proper repairs and obtained a new county electrical inspection approving the work. Flooded structures must also be inspected before power can be reconnected.

Tideland EMC is a member-owned distribution cooperative serving 22,800 accounts in Hyde, Beaufort, Pamlico, Dare, Washington and Craven counties.

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