

# Tideland Topics

REAL PEOPLE. REAL POWER.

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE MEMBER-OWNERS OF TIDELAND ELECTRIC MEMBERSHIP CORPORATION

## TEXT ALERT: New text alert option can prevent runaway electric bills

It happens more often than most realize. A central HVAC system malfunctions and starts heating and cooling at the same time. A water heater thermostat gets stuck or the tank springs a leak and the elements are constantly heating. A heat pump thermostat accidentally gets put into auxiliary or emergency heat mode. Or a piece of ductwork falls down in the crawlspace, forcing the central system to work overtime.

Unfortunately, many of these events go undetected until the homeowner receives an extremely high electric bill.

Now there is a way for Tideland members to safeguard themselves against such occurrences with our new "Usage Alert" service.

The easiest way to activate the service is to log on to the member portal by going to [www.tidelandemc.com](http://www.tidelandemc.com) and clicking the "My Account" link. Once

you've logged into your account click on the "My Alerts" tab. Type in your email address to receive email alerts. If you want to receive a text message alert you will need to type in your cell phone number and select your cellular provider from the drop down menu. Select the notification type(s) next to the alert(s) you are signing up for.

Next, fill in the dollar amount that will trigger a high-energy usage alert. Keep in mind this is a DAILY usage alert. So if your electric bills average \$180 a month, you may want to set your daily usage alert for \$6.00 (\$180 divided by 30 days = \$6.00).

You also may want to adjust the amount seasonally if your winter and summer electric bills fluctuate a great deal.

To have Tideland set the alerts up for you, call 1.800.637.1079.

## *Hurricane Arthur pricetag*

The numbers are in. The pricetag to restore power following Category 2 Hurricane Arthur, which swept through Tideland territory July 3 and 4, came in at slightly over \$300,000. Because this was not a FEMA-qualifying event, the co-op will not receive any reimbursement for expenses incurred. Fortunately, the cost per Tideland account comes to less than \$15. Costs associated with Hurricane Irene, which was a FEMA qualifying event, averaged \$125 per Tideland account.

## *Most August 2014 bills less than 2012*

While the co-op's wholesale power cost adjustment (WPCA) credit has begun to decline, most Tideland EMC members still paid less for power in August 2014 than they did in August 2012. The break-even point was realized at 800 kilowatt-hours. That means any member using more than 800 kWh in August 2014 paid less than they would have if August 2012 rates had been in place.



## Right-of-Way Maintenance Update

A very wet August has put our tree trimming and right-of-way mowing operations behind schedule.

Tideland has hired Lucas Tree Experts to trim trees in our right of way. In September they will be working in Dawson Creek (Kershaw, Janeiro, China Grove and Camp Jo Jane areas.)

Mowing crews will be working on River Road in Washington.

Remember: Your support of these operations is imperative to the delivery of reliable electric service. Trees are the number one cause of power outages.

## Message to our Member-Owners: Remain storm ready

By Paul Spruill  
General Manager & CEO

During the first week of August, all eyes were on the tropics as Hurricane Bertha formed in the Atlantic. With the Tideland area receiving over 5 inches of rain between August 1-4, we knew root systems were thoroughly saturated and trees would not hold up well in a wind event. While the system fortunately stayed far from the North Carolina coast, on August 10 Bertha remained active, dumping over a month's worth of rain on Great Britain, causing widespread flooding with sustained winds of 40 miles per hour.

Tidelanders don't have to go very far back in time to remember another Hurricane Bertha. The year was 1996 and that Category 3 storm made landfall in North Carolina, causing \$270 million in damage.

While the hurricane rating system can be very useful for the purposes of public planning by emergency management officials, I would caution Tidelanders not to become complacent when it comes to the real-world consequences of any tropical system. Keep in mind that Hurricane Irene was a Category 1 storm that inflicted the worst hurricane damage in Tideland's 73-year history.

There are many factors that contribute to the extent of storm damage beyond mere Category status. The size of the storm, the speed of the storm, arrival time in relation to high tide, existing saturation levels prior to the storm's arrival and so many other attributes have to be taken into consideration. There is also an inherent threat of tornadoes with any tropical system. As we know from recent experience, those types of winds can leave even the most sturdy structures vulnerable.

As we transition into autumn, I also want to remind you about the importance of planting trees away from power lines. Today's small seedling has the potential to become tomorrow's fall hazard. Each year the co-op spends approximately \$1 million on right-of-way clearing and it takes 5 years to trim our entire system.

So plan your planting projects wisely to fully reap the benefits of a healthy tree planted out of harm's way.

## Last call for 2014 classroom grant applications



Classroom teachers have until September 12, 2014, to submit Bright Ideas grant applications to Tideland EMC.

Awards up to \$2,000 are made to K-12 teachers to improve classroom instruction and encourage innovative teaching methods. Grant proposals that involve the study of energy are highly encouraged including renewable energy or energy efficiency.

Teachers may access the co-op's online application by visiting [www.ncbrightideas.com](http://www.ncbrightideas.com). Since 1994, the state's electric cooperatives have provided North Carolina classrooms with \$8.5 million in Bright Ideas funding.

For more information, call program coordinator Heidi Smith at 252.944.2410 or 1.800.637.1079, extension 1140.

## Tideland & Co-Bank Team Up:

# \$10,000 grant to assist tornado recovery

Tideland EMC and Co-Bank recently awarded \$10,000 to the North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church (NCCUMC) Disaster Recovery Ministry through Co-Bank's Sharing Success Matching Grant Program.

Co-Bank's "Sharing Success" matching grant program is designed to celebrate the vital role that cooperatives play in the U.S. rural economy and in individual communities across the country. Co-Bank has committed \$3 million in 2014 to match donations by cooperative partnerships through nonprofit organizations in their local communities. Contributions are matched on a dollar-for-dollar basis, up to \$5,000. The matching funds were made as a community investment by the co-op's 501c3 non-profit the Tideland Electric Care Trust.

This is the third year in a row that Tideland has successfully obtained Co-Bank matching grant funds for projects in the area. In 2013, the funds were awarded to the Hyde County domestic violence shelter to equip the facility with new energy efficient appliances and security equipment. In 2012, the funds were

by the series of tornadoes that struck Beaufort County in April of this year.

Tideland EMC's vice-president Doug Brinson and chief executive officer Paul Spruill traveled to a co-op member's home on July 24 to present the check to NCCUMC disaster response superintendent Cliff Harvell. A large group of teens and young adults from Roanoke, Virginia were on the jobsite that week volunteering a portion of their summer vacation to help repair storm damaged homes.

CoBank is a national cooperative bank serving vital industries across rural America. The bank provides loans, leases, export financing and other financial services to agribusinesses and rural power, water and communications providers in all 50 states.

CoBank is a member of the Farm Credit System, a nationwide network of banks and retail lending associations chartered to support the borrowing needs of U.S. agriculture and the nation's rural economy. In addition to serving its direct retail borrowers, the bank also provides wholesale loans and other



Tideland EMC board vice president J. Douglas Brinson and co-op general manager and CEO Paul Spruill present a \$10,000 check to NCCUMC Disaster Response superintendent Cliff Harvell to assist with Beaufort County tornado recovery.

awarded to NCCUMC Disaster Recovery to assist with housing recovery in Stumpy Point following Hurricane Irene. This year the \$10,000 grant will help NCCUMC Disaster Recovery continue work on homes damaged

financial services to affiliated Farm Credit associations serving approximately 70,000 farmers, ranchers and other rural borrowers in 23 states around the country.

## IMPORTANT FACTS ABOUT EMERGENCY GENERATORS

1.

**EMERGENCY GENERATORS MUST BE ISOLATED FROM THE UTILITY SYSTEM WITH A DOUBLE-POLE, DOUBLE-THROW SWITCH SO THEY DON'T BACKFEED AND ENERGIZE DOWNED POWER LINES**

2.

**ALWAYS ALLOW A GENERATOR TO COOL DOWN BEFORE REFUELING**

3.

**ALWAYS HAVE A WORKING CARBON MONOXIDE IN YOUR HOME BEFORE USING AN EMERGENCY GENERATOR IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO YOUR HOME**

4.

**MAKE SURE THE GENERATOR IS PROPERLY GROUNDED TO AVOID ELECTROCUTION**

5.

**USE PROPERLY SIZED EXTENSION CORDS WHEN PLUGGING APPLIANCES AND OTHER ITEMS INTO THE GENERATOR**

REAL PEOPLE.  
REAL POWER.

## I WENT HUNTING WITH A CAULK GUN.



I figured an afternoon of tracking down air leaks earned me a day out in the woods. Find out what you can do at [TogetherWeSave.com](http://TogetherWeSave.com).

## TOGETHERWESAVE.COM

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[www.tidelandemc.com](http://www.tidelandemc.com)

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Thanks to you, we are now over  
**4000 likes!**

(The most-liked electric co-op in NC!)

