

## Horry Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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

### Main Office

P.O. Box 119  
Conway, SC 29528-0119

**Conway Office: 369-2211**

**Socastee Office: 650-7530**



(to report power outages only)

**369-2212**

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James P. "Pat" Howle  
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### Co-op Connection Editor

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**Horry Electric Cooperative, Inc. is a non-profit, member-owned organization providing information and energy-related services on a fair and equitable basis.**



Your Touchstone Energy® Partner

## In case you missed it

**IF YOU WERE NOT** among the members who registered and participated in the 2012 Annual Meeting of Members of Horry Electric Cooperative earlier this month, you missed a great



opportunity to learn some important things about your cooperative and how we're looking out for you, our members.

### In good shape

Horry Electric is in good financial shape. We are continuing to do our best to contain costs for our members whenever possible. Along with our member-elected board of trustees, our staff carefully evaluates every dollar spent to be sure we make the most economical decisions on behalf of our members.

Working efficiently is a high priority at Horry Electric. Our engineers, line crews and other employees focus on efficient operations every day. We gain efficiency by collaborating with the other 19 electric cooperatives in South Carolina on the purchase of power through Central Electric Power Cooperative. We also have the advantage of partnering with 17 of our sister cooperatives through our statewide association, The Electric Cooperatives of South Carolina. We also partner with sister cooperatives to buy transformers and supplies at reduced costs through our materials supply cooperative, CEE-US.

### Can't predict the future

Power prices are up nationwide. The cost of power includes the cost of the fuel used to generate electricity and deliver it to our homes and businesses, but there's much more to it than that. The cost of transportation for those fuels and EPA regulations also factor very

heavily into the total cost of power.

We can't predict the future of the cost of power, but we can assure you that all of us at Horry Electric are dedicated to looking out for you, our members, as we work to keep electric bills affordable. In Columbia, S.C., and in Washington, D.C., we're maintaining close working relationships with local representatives so we are sure members' voices are heard in both halls of power. We are closely monitoring any discussions about government regulations that will have an impact on electric bills.

None of this is pleasant news, but we believe in straight talk and want to help our members prepare.

### Our greatest asset

On a more pleasant note, I want to tell you about the most important asset we have at Horry Electric Cooperative. It's not the nearly 5,000 miles of line that keeps the juice flowing to power the more than 67,000 homes and businesses on our system. It's not the 24 substations or the 77,887 poles on our distribution system. It's not the service trucks in our fleet, our office location in Socastee, our headquarters building in Conway or even our warehouse building.

The greatest asset Horry Electric has is the 170 full-time and two part-time employees who work for you. They are, without a doubt, the most dedicated group of people with whom I have ever had the pleasure to work, and I've been doing this for 39 years.

The men and women who work for you at Horry Electric are the engine that drives this cooperative. They aren't just employees. They are also members—of the cooperative and of the community.

You're likely to run into us at the local grocery store or the

corner gas station. Our children and grandchildren attend Horry County schools. Our families worship in local churches and we participate in various community activities and events.

Horry Electric employees take their responsibilities very seriously, and they are true advocates of the cooperative, our members and of our community. There is never a question about where they need to be or what they need to be doing when a storm hits Horry County. Regardless of the hour, the day or even the weather, they're on the job within minutes if the power goes out. They literally put their family life on hold; leave their spouses and children and work at their jobs until all repairs are made and all the lights are back on for our members.

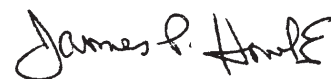
The dedication of Horry Electric employees extends beyond the borders of our service area. When disaster strikes a sister cooperative, our employees are ready to hit the road to offer whatever help we can to

make sure service to their members is restored as quickly and as safely as possible. Our crews have helped with recovery from hurricanes in Mississippi, Louisiana and in Virginia. They've also helped with recovery from ice storms in Kentucky. We've been lucky for the past few years. We haven't had to go through a major ice storm or a major hurricane. But if we do, we know our sister cooperatives will be here to help us just as we've been there to help them. Cooperation Among Cooperatives helps us in our pursuit of looking out for our members. It's one of the seven co-op principles, and it's the root of our success.

Distance isn't an obstacle for Horry Electric employees when it comes to putting the Cooperative Principle of Cooperation Among Cooperatives into practice. Thanks to the International Foundation of our national association, NRECA, we've been able to help provide developing countries with access to safe, reliable and affordable electricity. We were

represented by one of our engineers at a cooperative in Bolivia, and our training coordinator has had two separate tours of duty at cooperatives in Haiti and Somalia. We've been able to help with this program in other ways. A few years ago, we were able to donate old meters to an electric cooperative in Guatemala that would have otherwise been scrapped here in the United States.

Horry Electric employees take pride in their work, and they're always looking out for the best interest of all of our members. No matter what the task, they approach it with spirit and determination. They make my job easy, but none of their jobs are easy. They truly are a great group of men and women, and I'm proud to be associated with each and every one of them.



**James P. "Pat" Howle**  
*Executive Vice President and CEO*

## I Want to KNOW.

Decisions being made in the nation's capital will impact your electric bill in the future. Stay tuned to the latest news with email updates from your local electric cooperative manager.

Return this form  
with your next power bill  
and get connected TODAY.

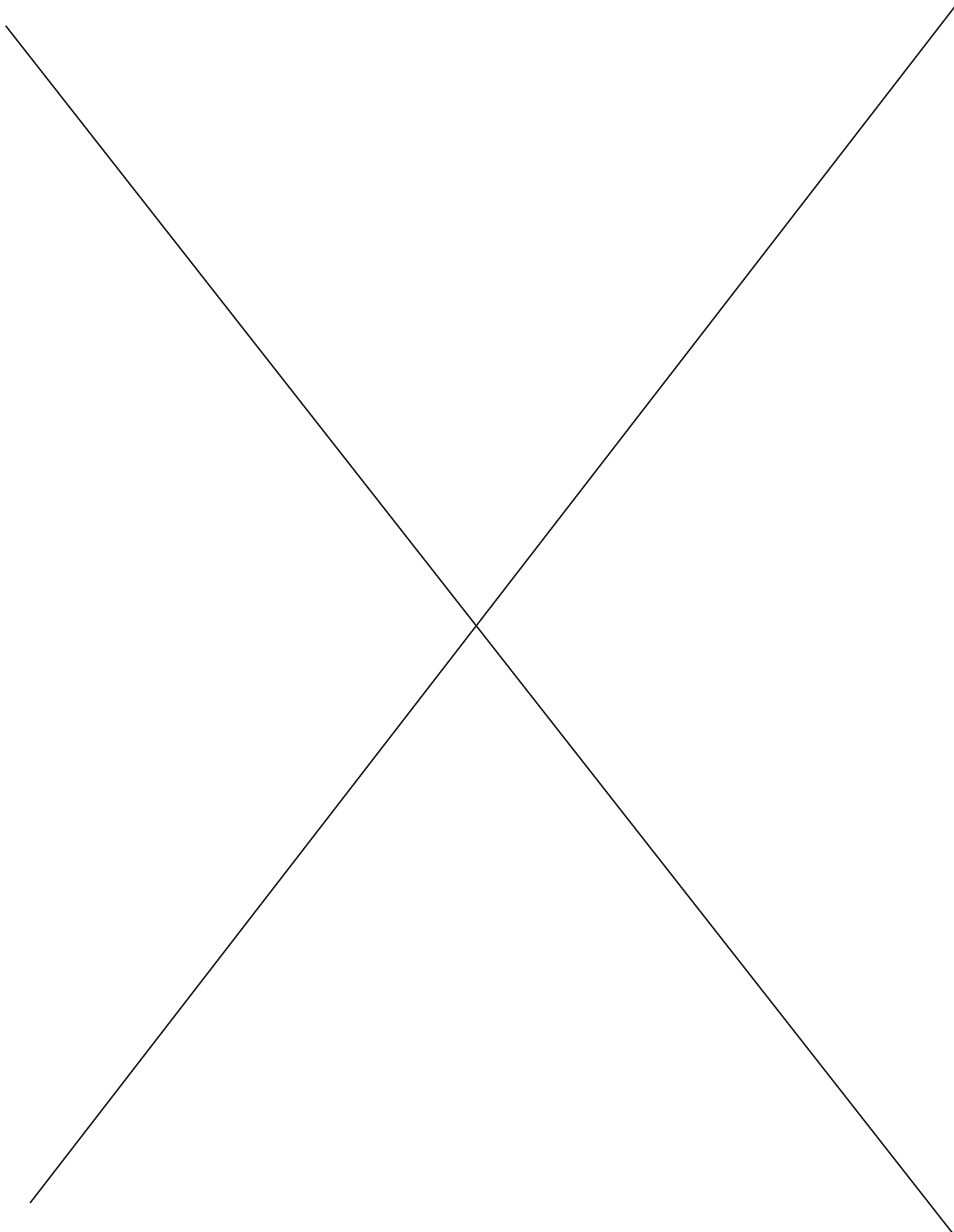
PLEASE PRINT

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Account Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Horry Electric Cooperative, Inc.  
Your Touchstone Energy® Partner

*I authorize my local electric cooperative to alert me regularly about developments in Washington, D.C., and other important cooperative news.*





# Stay Clear!

**A downed power line may not be a dead line.  
It could cause serious injury or death.**

**FOLLOW THESE TIPS FROM YOUR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE TO STAY SAFE:**

- **Assume all power lines are ENERGIZED and dangerous.** Even lines that are de-energized could become energized at any time. A live wire touching the ground can cause electricity to travel through the ground, radiating outward from the contact point. **STAY CLEAR!**
- **Never touch a downed power line!**
- **Never touch a person or object that is touching a power line.**  
Call 911.
- **If a power line falls across your vehicle while you are in it, stay inside until help arrives.** Warn others to stay away from the vehicle. If your vehicle is on fire and you must exit, jump clear so that no part of your body is touching the car when your feet touch the ground. Keeping both feet together, shuffle or hop until you are at least 30 feet away.
- **Call 911 immediately to report a downed power line.** Then call **HORRY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE** at 1-843-369-2211.

**Horry Electric Cooperative, Inc.**

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

Conway: 843-369-2211

Myrtle Beach: 843-650-7530

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

## Horry Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Get paid to stay in hot water!



Ready for a new water heater?  
Call Horry Electric.

We offer rebates of \$125 and \$250 for qualifying installations. Qualification includes an agreement to allow load control on the unit.

Free financing is available. Horry Electric will make all the financing arrangements for you and provide no-interest, no-cost, upfront financing. This option is available to qualified members with a new minimum 50-gallon water heater with a load control device. The rebate is applied to the amount financed. Payments are spread equally over 12 months and are added to your Horry Electric bill.

To find out more about the H<sub>2</sub>O Select water heater program, visit [horryelectric.com](http://horryelectric.com) or call (843) 369-2211.



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## Healthy Savings discounts

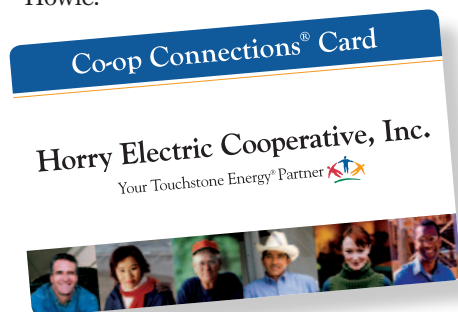
Special program can help members manage health care costs

**THE CO-OP CONNECTIONS** program helps Horry Electric members save money and live healthier every day. The highly successful prescription discount offer is now joined by discounts on dental, vision, hearing, lab work and imaging and chiropractor visits. Best of all, members get these great benefits for free. These new, no-cost health benefits are called the Healthy Savings Discounts.

Why is your co-op offering this? “The mission of electric cooperatives goes beyond providing reliable, affordable electricity,” says James P. “Pat” Howle, executive vice president and CEO of Horry Electric. “We’ve always aimed to improve the quality of life in the communities we serve and helping our members afford healthcare fits that mission.

“Take vision care, for instance,” says Howle, pointing out that Americans spend approximately \$15 billion on vision care yearly. “Members using the Co-op Connections card and Healthy Savings save 20 to 60 percent on eyewear, including discounts on frames, lenses, contacts, ophthalmology and LASIK surgery.”

The graphic at the top shows another area where Healthy Savings can help. “While Healthy Savings is not insurance, nor is it intended to replace insurance, we believe it will help our members,” says Howle.



### dental



that comes out to... **100,000,000** people in the U.S.

According to an April CBS News report titled “America’s Dental Insurance Crisis,” over 30% of the American population do not have dental insurance. That means more than 100 million people will have to pay full price out of pocket for their dental expenses, or worse, go without needed dental care.

Co-op members can save between 20–40% on all dental services, including orthodontics, periodontics and endodontics with the Co-op Connections Card.

Members can locate participating providers in the Horry County area and print additional cards online.

“Please note the first time you use it, you will have to set up an account using the member number on the back of your Co-op Connections card to access the ‘locate a provider’ site,” explains Howle.

Members are also asked to keep in mind that they must have the newer version of



the card with the necessary logos to obtain these discounts. “Look for the insert in the center of this month’s *South Carolina Living* for your new card,” says Howle.

Don’t make another appointment or buy another pair of glasses until you’ve seen what the Healthy Savings Discounts can save you. To learn more, visit [HealthySavings.coop](http://HealthySavings.coop).

# Miss SC sings a grandmother's praises

BY WALTER ALLREAD

**A RURAL LADY** from Horry County inspired Miss South Carolina 2011—in more ways than one.

Bree Boyce told the audience at the Rural Lady of the Year luncheon March 2, “My grandmother grew up on a farm here in Conway. She taught me along the way that you don’t get anywhere in life without hard work and dedication.”

Her grandmother grew up listening to opera, Boyce noted. “Who would have known that 22 years into my life, I would be singing opera on the Miss America stage,” she said. “And it was because of my grandmother, who instilled a love of music into my life—and a love of classical music.”

The Florence native and Francis Marion University student, who sang Puccini’s “O mio babbino caro” (“Oh My Beloved Father”) for the Rural Lady crowd, also credited her

grandmother’s advice to work hard for helping her overcome a challenge she’d faced since childhood—obesity. Boyce, who reached 234 pounds by age 17, finally shed the weight through hard work and dedication, she says. Boyce now carries her message of good health and nutrition around the state as Miss South Carolina.

She works out at least an hour each day, eats fresh fruits and vegetables as well as lean protein and good complex carbs. “I tried all those fad diets where you cut out every single carb, you starve for about two weeks and then you eat for about two weeks, anything you want to, because you go on your binge!” she said.

Boyce reminds kids that “our bodies are a lot like cars. If we fuel our cars with the wrong kind of fuel, it’s going to not work properly, and we’ll be stranded on the side of the road.” She added, “Our bodies were designed to move.” ☺



Bree Boyce sang Puccini’s “O mio babbino caro” for the Rural Lady crowd.

## Diligence, dedication—and a dash of humor

### Elizabeth Johnson of Conway named 34th Rural Lady of the Year

Hard-working, diligent, honest and dedicated. That’s Elizabeth Lawson Johnson of Conway, who now adds 34th Rural Lady of the Year to a string of accolades earned in 45 years as a member of Horry Electric Cooperative.

She received the honor at a luncheon March 2 at HEC. The annual event pays homage to the co-op’s rural roots and the important role that women play in the success of Horry County farms. Formally known as the Miss Leo G. Knauff Leadership Award, the Rural Lady award honors a late HEC employee who helped rural families learn to make the best and most efficient use of co-op power.

The wife of James L. Johnson Jr., she has been associated with farming all her life. The Johnsons are members of Good Hope Baptist Church.

Selection Committee member Bruce Johnson of Horry County State Bank said Mrs. Johnson “is committed to making Horry County a better place,” adding, “She also has an excellent sense of humor.” She gave the crowd a sample as she accepted her honor, noting, “I’ve always wondered, but I didn’t think I’d ever get it!” ☺



Elizabeth Johnson receives the Rural Lady of the Year honor. “I’ve always wondered, but I didn’t think I’d ever get it!” she said.

WALTER ALLREAD

## It pays to be a member!

BY PENELOPE HINSON

**NOT MANY BUSINESSES** pay you for buying something you wouldn't want to live without—but electric cooperatives do.

The 'payment' happens through something known as 'capital credits'. Capital credits come from the money a cooperative has left over after paying all of its expenses in a given year. At the end of the year, that money is allocated to each member's account, according to the amount of electricity the customer bought.

When finances allow, Horry Electric Cooperative returns capital credits to its member/owners in the form of a capital credit check. "Last year, the cooperative disbursed more than \$1.5 million from the capital credits account," said Jodi Braziel, manager of office services for the cooperative. "This year, we're proud to announce we'll be distributing approximately \$1,600,000."

### A different way of doing business

Unlike other types of companies, cooperatives do not have shareholders who expect to make money from the profits generated by the company. Cooperatives are not-for-profit businesses that exist solely to provide their members with a particular service such as electricity.

"In a co-op, the net margins don't belong to the company; they belong to the consumers who paid their monthly electric bills," said Braziel.

In effect, the members of a cooperative are the stakeholders. Because of that, when the cooperative takes in more money than is needed to run the business, the owners are entitled to a portion of it.

### How do capital credits work?

A member's 'equity' in the cooperative is based on the amount of power the customer has purchased during the year.

"The more electricity the customer

buys, the higher their share of equity," says Ashley Anderson, secretary and treasurer of the board of trustees of Horry Electric Cooperative. "The co-op sets up a credit account that shows on the books the share of the year's net margins belonging to each member."

Generally, the members don't receive a check the same year they earned the capital credits. "That's because electric cooperatives use their members' equity to fund system improvements," said Anderson.

"If we couldn't get the operating capital from member payments, we'd have to borrow from the bank or some other source, which would cause electric rates to go up," said Braziel.

As new member equity funds come in year after year, the cooperative is able to 'retire' its older capital credit funds, issuing members their share in the form of a capital credit check.

Due to the expense of processing and issuing checks, capital credit refunds below \$10 will be credited

to the individual's electric account. "So if you don't get a check, you'll see a credit on your electric bill," said Braziel.

Capital credit checks are expected to be delivered to members by the end of April. "It's an exciting time for us around here," said Braziel. "Being able to return capital credits is a direct reflection on the financial strength and stability of your cooperative, and that's something in which we can all take pride."

"To help members calculate and estimate what their capital credit check might be, we created the chart at the top of the page," said Braziel. "If you still have questions, please don't hesitate to call us." ☎

### Capital credit disbursement 2012

This year, member owners will be receiving a portion of the capital credits assignment for 1988 and 2011. The allowable retirement this year is \$1,600,000 less \$250,000 in estate payments. The total amount being distributed is \$1,350,000, which includes the \$1,039,372.35 balance of 1988 and \$310,627.65 of 2011.

If you were a member in 2011, you will receive 3.6% of your 2011 assignment. If you were a member in 1988, you will receive the remaining unretired balance of your assignment for that year.

#### Example of 2011 allocation and retirement

You can calculate the approximate amount of your 2011 allocation and disbursement by using this example. Capital credit disbursements are made in the form of a capital credit check, which will be mailed to you by the end of April.

If your 2011 electric bills totaled:	\$1,000	\$1,500	\$2,000	\$2,500
The 2011 assignment percent is: (multiply the percentage times your bills)	6%	6%	6%	6%
Your capital credit assignment for 2011 would be:	\$60	\$90	\$120	\$150
The 2011 retirement percentage will be 3.6% of your capital credit assignment.	3.6%	3.6%	3.6%	3.6%
Your general retirement refund for 2011 would be approximately:	\$2.16	\$3.24	\$4.23	\$5.40

Member economic participation is one of the seven cooperative principles, and it's another way your cooperative is looking out for you.