

## Horry Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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

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**TO REPORT  
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Horry Electric Cooperative, Inc., is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

## Continuing the legacy

It's an honor to follow in Pat Howle's footsteps as CEO



**IT IS AN HONOR** to be entrusted with the responsibilities that go along with serving as the executive vice president and CEO of your cooperative. I pledge to work hard to fill the shoes of the managers who have served before me and, with the help of staff, make sure your

cooperative remains on a successful path.

Horry Electric has a strong history. I have had the pleasure of working with two different managers during my career here, and Pat Howle, who retired on July 5, left behind a legacy of growth and achievement.

We're featuring Pat's accomplishments and his career in this edition of *South Carolina Living*, but I want to make special note of some important facts and figures, plus give him full credit for helping us achieve status as a Four Star Service Excellence Cooperative.

### Tremendous growth

Under Pat's leadership, we grew from a cooperative with 30,486 meters on our system to one with nearly 81,000 meters.

Total revenue also grew in the 24 years Pat was at the helm at Horry Electric. Our year-end number was \$35 million dollars in 1994. Our year-end revenue total in 2018 was \$162 million. That's an increase of \$127 million in revenue.

Utility plant growth is another impressive number. At year-end in 1994, it was \$68 million dollars compared to 2018 year-end financials showing \$356 million dollars. That's an increase of \$288 million in plant growth.

### Horry County strong

Horry County is the fastest growing county in South Carolina, and Horry Electric is growing right along with it.

In addition to growing the numbers in revenue, plant and meters, Pat guided the cooperative in many other ways. We increased our community involvement and focused efforts on member communications.

In 1999, we became a Touchstone Energy Cooperative. We follow the seven guiding Cooperative Principles and we have also committed ourselves to the four Touchstone Energy values of accountability, integrity, innovation and commitment to community. The employees, management team and members of the board of trustees live those values and advocate the cooperative business model in everything they do. Every. Single. Day.

### Four star service excellence

In 2018, we became a Four Star Service Excellence Cooperative. Achieving and maintaining that status is important to all of us, and we are thankful to Pat for helping lead us through that process.

Pat is leaving behind some pretty big shoes to fill, but I'm committed to continuing and building on a legacy that goes all the way back to April 1940 when my own grandfather was one of the original Board members who helped start Horry Electric Cooperative. I am honored to continue the legacy of service established by those early members—one made even stronger by folks like Pat Howle.

*Daniel B. Shelley, III*

**DANIEL B. SHELLEY, III**  
Executive Vice President and CEO

# Helping each other help members

## Three Coastal grads move into new positions

**A STRONG TEAM** can change players and keep driving ahead.

That's the score at Horry Electric Cooperative now as Danny Shelley, HEC's long-time chief financial officer, comes in for James P. "Pat" Howle, who has retired as CEO and executive vice president.

As Shelley calls the plays—with coaching from the member-elected Board of Trustees, of course—Kisha Roberts has stepped into his old slot as CFO. Megan McNeill has moved into Robert's most recent position as accounting supervisor, while Francisca Argueta follows McNeill as payroll accountant.

If we were talking about the Chanticleers football squad at the women's alma mater, Coastal Carolina

Heath, 16. After graduating from Aynor High School, Roberts went on to earn a bachelor's degree in accounting at Coastal. She started as a cashier for HEC in 2004, was soon promoted to assistant accountant and, later, accounting supervisor.

Roberts has earned professional certifications from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, including the Cooperative Financial Professional Certificate and Management Essentials, as well as completing the Leadership Conway program. Roberts is active in Women Involved in Rural Electrification (WIRE), a community outreach organization affiliated with Horry Electric and other co-ops in South Carolina.

McNeill has been with HEC for 13 years. She started as a part-time office assistant in 2006, became a full-time payroll accountant in 2012 and was promoted to payroll/assistant accountant in 2015. Raised in Conway and a graduate of Carolina Forest High, McNeill earned a bachelor's degree in accounting at Coastal.

McNeill serves on Leadership Conway's Board of Regents and is active in WIRE. She appreciates the co-op's commitment to community. "The people who work here are amazing and like family," McNeill says.

Speaking of family, she notes, "What I take the most pride in is that my great-grandfather, Fred McNeill, and a distant relative, Henry McNeill, both served on the board at Horry Electric before I came here. It really makes me feel dedicated to serving this company and its members just as they did."

Argueta, now in her fourth year with Horry Electric, started as a member service trainee, advancing to member service representative and work order accountant. Born in Texas and raised in the Carolinas, she graduated from Conway High School and earned a



**New CFO Kisha Roberts (center) with Payroll Accountant Francisca Argueta (right) and Accounting Supervisor Megan McNeill.**

bachelor's degree in accounting at Coastal.

Argueta feels right at home at the co-op: "I love the family feeling here at Horry Electric! The co-op creates a comfortable working environment where I feel valued as an individual and have a sense of belonging. Everyone is just truly supportive in the hard times and in the good times, whether lending a hand in a time of need or celebrating with you an accomplishment. Everyone is just there for each other, and it is just a blessing to have HEC as a second family."

She and her husband, Osman Argueta, have two children: Carissa, 12, and Alan, 10. They attend church at the Assemblies of God, Iglesia El Tabor. Argueta is involved with a children's ministry there, as well as with the WIRE chapter at HEC.



**The Cooperative Advantage**  
LOCAL PEOPLE. SERVING YOU.

Integrity • Accountability • Innovation • Commitment to Community

University, the phrase "deep bench" would apply. But this is an electric cooperative, where everybody plays every down—and all 168 employees work collectively to achieve a common goal: serving members with integrity, accountability, innovation and commitment to community.

"I'm so thankful to be part of a team that collectively achieves organizational goals and supports each other. I love a challenge and enjoy helping others solve problems," says Roberts, a 15-year HEC veteran. "The cooperative spirit and dedication of each employee here at Horry Electric helps us deliver the quality of service our members expect and deserve. That's what we call the Cooperative Advantage."

An Aynor native, she and her husband, Andy Roberts, have a son,

## HORRY EXTRA

### A friend of the people

James P. "Pat" Howle recently received the state's highest civilian honor, the Order of the Palmetto. Turn to page 20B.

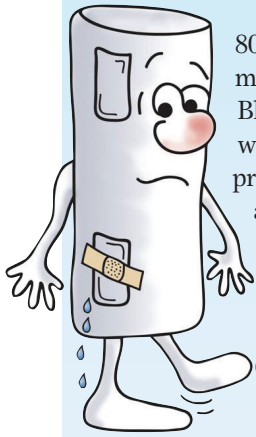




## WE WILL PAY YOU TO STAY IN HOT WATER!

**THE AVERAGE LIFE** of a water heater is between six and 10 years. If your water heater has been around that long, it might be time to start thinking about replacing it.

"Before you do anything, you need to call us to learn more about our H<sub>2</sub>O Select program," says Eddy Blackburn, marketing analyst for the cooperative.



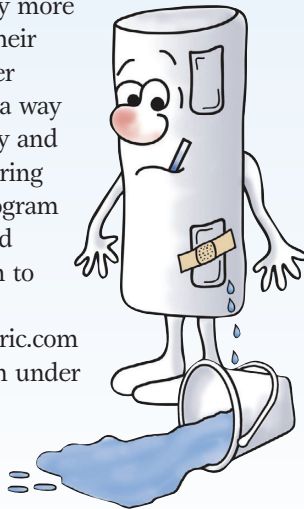
"We offer rebates of \$250 for a minimum 80-gallon electric water heater or \$125 for a minimum 50-gallon electric water heater," says Blackburn. "All you have to do is make sure the water heater meets the specifications of our program, sign the participation agreement and allow us to install a load management device on the unit."

To make sure the process goes smoothly, members will need to make sure a 4-by-4-inch metal junction box is wired to the tank and verify that the upper and lower elements are not more than 4,500 watts.

"If your water heater has already kicked the bucket and you've replaced it with a new one, it still may not be too late to qualify for the program," says Blackburn. Members who have installed a replacement water heater that meets the requirements of the program in the past 12 months, might still be able to qualify for the program!

Horry Electric Cooperative is always glad to help members explore ways to use energy more efficiently and get the most out of their energy dollars. "We created the water heater program to give participants a way to get plenty of hot water—efficiently and conveniently," says Blackburn. "Offering and qualifying members for this program helps Horry Electric save money, and we're happy to pass those savings on to participating members!"

To find out more, visit [horryelectric.com](http://horryelectric.com) and look for the H<sub>2</sub>O Select program under the myHome tab or call us at (843) 369-2211.



**We'll pay you to stay in hot water!**  
Rebates of \$125 and \$250 for qualifying installations with a load control device.

**H<sub>2</sub>O Select**

**It's like a shower of money!**

Receive up to a **\$250** rebate when you install a new electric water heater\*.

**It's easy!**

Members of Horry Electric Cooperative who replace or install a new **50-gallon (minimum) electric water heater will receive a \$125 rebate.**

Replace or install a new **80-gallon (minimum) electric water heater to receive a \$250 rebate.**

For details, visit [www.horryelectric.com](http://www.horryelectric.com) or call **843-369-2211**

\*Water heater must meet minimum efficiency standards.

## H<sub>2</sub>O Load Management Program

### Receive a one-time \$50 electric bill credit for helping us take a load off!

Help control the future cost of power by reducing the demand for electricity in your home during peak hours. Members will receive a one-time \$50 electric bill credit from Horry Electric for each load management switch installed on qualifying water heaters\* in your home.

Visit our website for complete details, [www.horryelectric.com](http://www.horryelectric.com) or call 843-369-2211.

\* Water heaters must be a minimum 50 gallon capacity; electric; 5 years old (or less) and meet the ASHRAE Standard 90 or NAES.

Switches must be installed by an Horry Electric-approved contractor.





# Pat Howle: Embodying the spirit of cooperation



JENNIFER HARMON

**IN HIS 46-YEAR CAREER**, James P. “Pat” Howle served two electric co-ops, but through the power of cooperation, made life better for all South Carolinians.

Howle, who recently retired as CEO and executive vice president of Horry Electric Cooperative after 24 years, recently received the Order of the Palmetto, the state’s highest civilian honor. The award refers to Howle as “a friend of the people” and within what Howle calls “the co-op family,” he’s long been a highly respected figure.

Howle helped lead statewide organizations that assist all 20 electric distribution co-ops around South Carolina. He served on the board of Central Electric Power Cooperative, the co-ops’ power supply aggregator and transmission cooperative, as well as that of Cooperative Electric Energy-Utility Supply (CEE-US), through which the co-ops purchase equipment. Howle also served on the board of The Electric Cooperatives of South Carolina, the statewide service association, sharing his skills on a variety of committees over the years, including the Government

Relations Committee.

Howle began his co-op career Feb. 11, 1973, at Pee Dee Electric Cooperative, based in his hometown of Darlington. The co-op put the St. John’s High School student to work in the warehouse one summer, and Howle later had a stint on a line crew. After he graduated from the University of South Carolina in 1972 with a bachelor’s degree in political science, Pee Dee found a better use for his talents—government relations work.

Working with legislative liaisons from other South Carolina co-ops gave Howle and his peers a chance to stand up for co-op members in the halls of power in Columbia, as well as Washington, D.C. In his early days, he remembers when President Richard M. Nixon decided to defund the Rural Utilities Service loan program for co-ops. That is, “Until Ol’ Strom convinced him otherwise,” Howle notes, referring to U.S. Sen. Strom Thurmond. Thurmond was a staunch co-op ally, as was then-junior Sen. Ernest F. Hollings, Howle recalls.

A knack for building strong relationships served Howle—and his

**Pat Howle with two of his four grandchildren (Ellie and Emery), his two sons, daughter-in-law, and his wife, Janet.**

state—well over the years. Howle, who left Pee Dee as vice president of government relations and energy management in 1995, calls his time at Pee Dee instructive. He learned to work with six different county councils in the co-op’s service area.

Howle, who also served on Darlington City Council from January 1986 to September 1995, said an advantage in Horry County—one of the largest counties east of the Mississippi, he notes—is being able to work with just one county council. Horry Electric, alone among South Carolina electric co-ops and among a few nationwide, serves entirely within one county.

Like so many natives of the Pee Dee, who grew up doing the state dance on the Strand during the summer, Howle and his wife, Janet, took naturally to life in Horry County. They raised two boys there: James P. Howle Jr., now

**Howle poses alongside most of his Horry Electric team in a photo for Law Enforcement Appreciation Day.**





an electrical engineer with the state-owned utility Santee Cooper, and Steven O. Howle, who works in property management for Santee Cooper. James Jr. and his wife, Brooke Godwin Howle, have blessed Pat and Janet with two granddaughters, Ellie and Emery. Steven and his wife, Laura Isaac Howle, have given them two wonderful grandsons, O'Neil and Patrick.

The Howles are members of Trinity United Methodist Church in Conway. Naturally a fan of USC Gamecock athletics, he's also a strong supporter of Coastal Carolina University's Chanticleers. An avid golfer, Howle also lists "shagging and enjoying beach music" and "spending time with my grandchildren" as favorite pastimes.

Howle has given much of his time to enhancing life in Horry County. He has been a member of the Conway Kiwanis Club and the Chanticleer Athletic Foundation and its board of directors. He also serves on the Myrtle Beach Air Force Base Redevelopment Authority.

The base closed in 1993, before Howle arrived, but he stepped up to serve on the Redevelopment Authority after becoming Horry's CEO. Howle recognized the value to the county—and of Grand Strand tourism to the state's economy—of redeveloping the property.

"If you go over there today, we've been really successful with Market Commons," he notes. "Housing has exploded over there. It is a premier destination."

Howle also brought with him

another strong "co-op connection"—the co-ops' collaborative efforts on economic development. He served on the board of Palmetto Economic Development Corp. from 2006 until 2012. Now called the SC Power Team, the cooperative-led group helps attract and retain large industries and the quality jobs they bring to the Palmetto State.

He actually helped lay the groundwork for this effort in his Pee Dee days. Back then, Howle and other co-op legislative liaisons advocated for the passage in 1996 of the state's Rural Development Act. "The act allows electric co-ops to take part of their power tax that they would have to send to Columbia and use that locally for economic development," Howle notes. "I think to date, we've kept \$6.7 million dollars in Horry County."

"Anything that helps Horry County will help our members," he says. "If a new industry comes in, even if the co-op doesn't provide them with electric service, a lot of our members will probably work there. Anything that improves the economy of Horry County, we're all for that."

Howle continues, "That's cooperation—the willingness to get involved, to help our communities."

Respected throughout the South Carolina co-op family, Howle is also beloved by Horry Electric employees, many of whom call him, "Mr. Pat."

"We all work closely together. The only thing we have to sell, I tell our folks,



**Howle has helped weather many storms during his time at Horry Electric, including Hurricane Floyd in 1999.**

is service. We're not in it for profit. As a not-for-profit cooperative, we return capital credits to our members. Last year we returned over \$4 million in capital credits to our members, who own the business."

While Howle appreciates all co-op employees, he knows well why the electric lineworker is a modern icon of heroism: "It's a serious business out there," he says. "I've got all the respect in the world for those guys."

Howle notes, "Typically when somebody comes to work for the co-op like me, 46 years later, they retire from the co-op. We have very few leave once they become part of the family. I think this year we've had five that have retired and all of them were 35- to 40-year employees. It's a great team to be on."

Embodying the spirit of cooperation, he says, "I'm not going anywhere. I'll still be the biggest co-op supporter around, and we'll still live here. Anything I can do to help, I'm willing to help."



# Use **PowerTouch** to get in touch...

**PowerTouch from Horry Electric Cooperative is the best way to help us get your lights back on quicker.**

This state-of-the-art outage management system lets you immediately report outages. When you call, your phone number will be matched to your name and address to ensure prompt service.

**Important:** We must have your up-to-date information for the phone number at your service address, plus any additional cellular phone number(s) (with area code) associated with your account in order for PowerTouch to work efficiently.

**Please fill out the attached form, mail in with your bill payment or drop off at your nearest Horry Electric office.**

You can also sign up online @[www.horryelectric.com](http://www.horryelectric.com). Sign in on **MyEnergy Online** to update contact information and to automatically receive alerts and reminders.

**MyEnergy**  
*online*

**Horry Electric Cooperative, Inc.**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Power Out? Call  
**PowerTouch**  
**843.369.2212**

Submitting this form gives Horry Electric Cooperative your consent to send automated messages to any telephone number(s) provided. Please note that Horry Electric will never share your personal information with a third-party source.

## **My Up-To-Date Phone Number(s) Where I Receive Service from Horry Electric Cooperative.**

Name on Account \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_  
(Where You Receive Service – No P.O. Boxes Please)

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Cell (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
(At This Address)

E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Horry Electric's Account Number \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

