

## Horry Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

# Looking out for you: Are you cybersecure?



**LOOKING AHEAD**, October will be a month of awareness. It's National Co-op Month and National Breast Cancer Awareness Month. We will be celebrating and recognizing both on our social media channels, but my focus in this month's column is in preparation of another October event.

## Heed the warnings

October is National Cybersecurity Awareness Month. We see warnings about it every day. Sony, Target, Home Depot and even CVS have all been attacked by cybercriminals. Let's face it: In today's world, the cybersecurity threats facing our nation can seem overwhelming and downright scary. Cybersecurity, specifically the protection and security of individual member information and assets and the nation's complex, interconnected network of power plants, transmission lines and distribution facilities, is a top priority for electric cooperatives and other segments of the electric power industry.

That's why we're once again participating in National Cybersecurity Awareness Month (NCSAM).

## Raise awareness

By raising awareness and understanding of basic cybersecurity practices, we can all work together to combat cyberthreats. We're doing our part by inviting you to join us in recognizing NCSAM in October.

Throughout the month, we'll be offering tips via social media and through our blog. The latest posts are always on the front page of our web

site, [HorryElectric.com](http://HorryElectric.com). When we post something, please read it and then please share it.

## It starts at home

We each have a role to play in protecting the security of our personal and professional data. Here are some handy tips you can use to safeguard your computer:

- ▶ Keep all software on all devices—including PCs, tablets and smartphones—up to date to reduce risk of infection from malware.
- ▶ Create long passwords that only you will remember and change them every six months. Remember, a strong password is at least 12 characters long.
- ▶ Avoid the use of thumb drives and other portable memory devices.
- ▶ Don't click on web links or attached files in emails when you're not certain of the sender.
- ▶ Keep pace with new ways to stay safe online.

Feel free to share these security tips with friends, family and colleagues. Encourage them to be web wise. We hope you will join us in raising cybersecurity awareness. Please use and follow #cyberaware on your personal social media to show and share your support.

To learn more about NCSAM, visit [staysafeonline.org](http://staysafeonline.org).

*Daniel B. Shelley, III*

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

## Trio digs into abnormally high energy use

**THREE HORRY ELECTRIC** employees are doing their part in looking out for members through a new process. The extreme temperatures of the summer normally cause a member's power bill to increase.

HEC offers a number of online tools members can use to determine their energy use and calculate an estimate of what their power bill should be. These tools are available on Horry Electric's website. However, there could be an issue in your home you're not aware of that's causing your bill to climb.

Brian Swart is HEC's software development supervisor and he's created an algorithm to help pinpoint members with high energy use. The algorithm looks for "at least 150 percent average increase in use over the last five days," says Swart. The process digs deeper. It goes on to look at the past 10 days, the previous month, and even the previous year. Using the algorithm, a report is generated twice weekly with a list of accounts with potential issues.

Gordon Lay, accounts receivable supervisor, takes the report and works to identify members with potential issues. If a problem is identified, Lay contacts the members and offers some suggestions on what they can check. If he can't help the member find the problem, he sends them to Ricky Lowder, one of HEC's trusted energy advisors. Lowder gathers information on the member's home and sees if any changes have been made. He

looks for changes in the base load and cooling or heating use.

"I calculate the wattage I feel the heat pump should use based on home size, heat pump size... I often ask the member to go to the circuit breaker panel and feel the face of the breakers to see if one feels warm," says Lowder. He has the member tell him what the breaker serves and from there, Lowder may have them shut it off a few minutes to see if the meter readings change to confirm there's a problem.

Thanks to existing data and technologies, HEC is able to provide this service without spending members' money. "It helps the member avoid a prolonged issue in their home and it helps the cooperative by reducing our peak load," Swart says.

The trio has helped several members diagnose issues in their homes, including: "AC units that are cooling and heating at the same time, water heaters running constantly, and a case where the hot water faucet was left on," Lay says.

HEC is here to help its members, but there are ways you can be proactive if you feel you have a similar problem. "Members should use the online services, such as MyEnergy Online and the Home Energy Advisor to stay aware of energy use and what adjustments should be made to save energy. Sign up for daily use alerts before something happens," Lowder advises.

**As always, members who have any questions can call Horry Electric's Trusted Energy Advisors at (843) 369-2211.**



Gordon Lay (left), Ricky Lowder (center), and Brian Swart work together, using technology and HEC's online tools to look out for members.

## How to save with Home Energy Advisor

Be sure to check out the Home Energy Advisor tools available on Horry Electric Cooperative's website. These interactive tools help you zero in on where you can save the most—and fast!

You can find the Home Energy Advisor under the "My Energy" tab. Click "Home Energy Suite" and you'll find these options and more:

### ► The Home Energy Advisor—

This quick calculator provides an estimated breakdown of your energy use and costs by heating, cooling, lighting, and more.



### ► Bill Analysis—Here

the Home Energy Advisor goes one step further and incorporates your actual HEC bills in its calculations. Just log into your account, click on the "My Use" tab and then click on "Analyze My Bill" to access your personal bill analysis.

## HORRY EXTRA

### 'It took a village'

One of the Local People, Serving You, HEC Member Service Representative Kolton Wade credits her co-workers—and God—for their support over the 13 years since her daughter was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes at age 15. "It took a village to help raise Kourtney," says Wade, who recently celebrated 25 years at HEC. Her story is on Page 24B.



WALTER ALLREAD



# The importance of a lineman's gear

'It's so we can go home to our families'

**A JOB:** it's something most people keep on autopilot. Wake up, get ready, drive to work, and take care of the tasks that need to be completed. As far as getting the job done, it's the same for Horry Electric's linemen, but it's not a job you can do on autopilot. You have to be aware, alert and focused at all times.

HEC's linemen operate 24/7/365. When a storm hits and the lights go out, the linemen go out in any condition to get a member's lights back on, as long as it's safe. As our motto reads: Safety is our First Concern. "It doesn't matter if the lights are out or what the weather is, they're going to work safe and they're going to work hard," says Brian Chestnut, HEC's safety coordinator.

Safety covers many aspects, including the gear the linemen are required to wear. There are two different sets of gear a lineman can wear: climbing gear or bucket gear. When a lineman is in the bucket, he has a harness around him and he's usually wearing his rubber gloves and sleeves. This is more

common when it comes to making repairs or doing work on overhead lines; however, there are times a bucket truck can't fit in a certain area. "Any time there's a pole we can't get our truck to, we have to use our climbing gear," says Jonathan Cartrette, an overhead advanced lineman. A lineman's

Linemen like Kevin Crave have to wear their harness gear, including rubber gloves and sleeves any time they get in the bucket.

climbing gear includes wearing hooks, his belt, his tools and more, which adds some weight; 30 to 35 pounds to be exact. When a lineman is in the bucket in his harness, sleeves, and gloves, that adds about 10 to 12 pounds. The rubber sleeves and gloves are another obstacle a lineman has to overcome. These are thick and a lineman has to teach himself how to work with limited mobility. "It's aggravating at first because it restricts your movement. It's hot, they rub you in your neck and all the sweat stays in them...but you get used to it," says Jacob Riddei, advanced lineman.

Rubber gloves and sleeves can be viewed as more than a safety feature. "That is your lifeline in this line of work," says Jamie Spivey, underground line crew foreman. OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) requires that gloves be tested every six months and sleeves every year. "Horry Electric goes above and beyond that. We go to every 60 days because

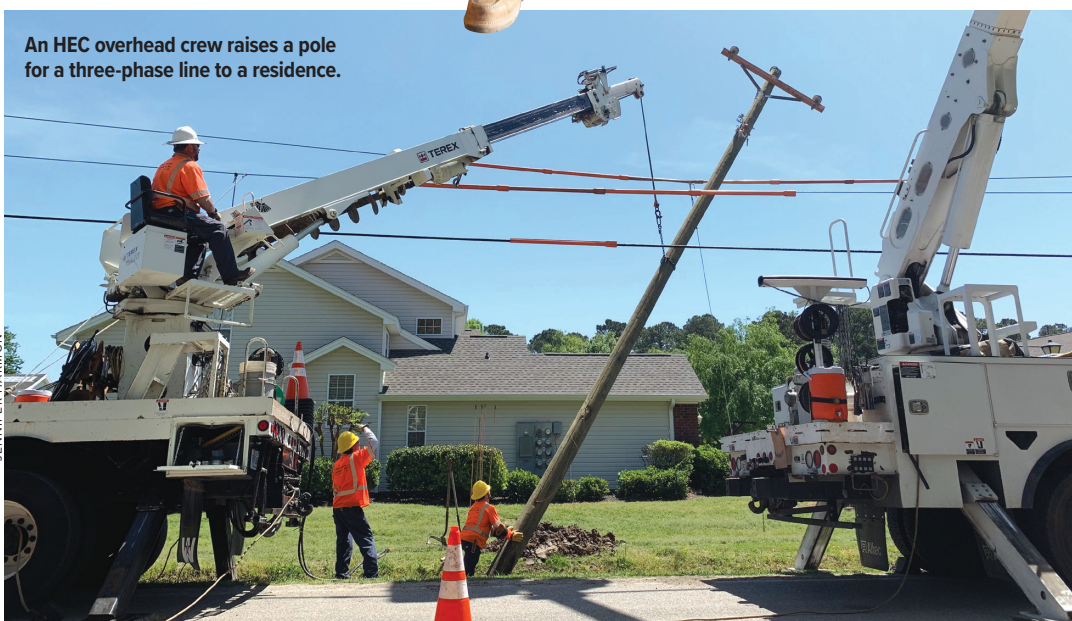
Underground lineman Justin Cummings (left) works inside a junction box, as Phillip McClellan helps feed rope through an underground pipe to begin pulling wire back so power can be established.

a lineman is around a lot of sharp objects," says Chris Grainger, operations trainer.

Safety is a top priority for a lineman, but so is his family. Wearing his PPE (personal protective equipment) is one way to make sure he makes it home. If you sit down with a lineman, ask him why it's so important that he wear his rubber gloves and sleeves. Most of them will respond with a simple, but powerful answer: "So that we can go home to our families," says lineman Kelly Jordan.

"Our rules were written because somebody got hurt. We wear our equipment because all of us want to go home and see our families. We want to go home without any injuries. 10 fingers, 10 toes and two eyes, just like we left," says Grainger.

Lineman Sean Brown sports his climbing gear.





## 'Pray for grace and mercies'

**WHEN KOLTON WADE** gave the invocation at Horry Electric's 2019 annual meeting in May, her words held a deeper meaning than most members present could have known. Yet, behind her measured tone, Wade's coworkers heard her sincerity—and quiet strength—loud and clear:

"Lord, bless the sick, those stricken with illnesses," Wade prayed. "Breathe life into them. Step in and touch them with a miracle in this hour of need."



Member Service Representative Kolton Wade gives the invocation at HEC's 2019 annual meeting.

### 'It took a village'

A member service representative who has been with HEC for 25 years in August, Wade and her coworkers have shared many prayers in the last 13 years. Her daughter, Kourtney, 28, was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes at age 15. They prayed together again five years ago, when Kourtney's health worsened: She developed gastroparesis (GP), a chronic condition affecting stomach muscles, preventing proper emptying of the stomach, affecting her weight gain.

For Kolton and Kourtney, life has become a blur of hospitals and treatments, with tentative progress, heart-breaking, sometimes life-threatening setbacks and, mercifully, sporadic forward progress. Amid the challenges, Kolton raised two healthy and happy sons, Kirkland and Kollin.

Like Kourtney, Kolton credits her faith, buttressed by supporters in two local churches, as well as their co-op family at HEC. As Kolton notes, "It took a

village to help raise Kourtney. I depended on a lot of people. I'm grateful. They've been very good and very understanding."

### A birthday present

"I prayed for my job at Horry Electric because I was working at a hotel at the beach. She was my baby at the time, and I was like, 'Lord, if you could just help me with a nine-to-five Monday-to-Friday job.' I got hired on my birthday, July 18, and officially started August 3."

Her supervisor, Member Service Supervisor Gail Morton, notes, "Kolton has managed to stay strong and be an advocate for Kourtney. She makes sure Kourtney receives the best care possible. Kolton also still manages to give her time to her sons, as well as Kirk's family and her mother, Ms. Doris Ballen. Kolton is a loving and giving person who is outgoing and makes friends wherever she goes. I am proud to call her my friend."

Kolton notes, "My children have grown up as co-op kids. But I have been very, very, very fortunate and blessed that the co-op family has been there for us."

### Twins' telepathy

Demonstrating what she calls their "twins' telepathy," Kourtney finishes her mother's thoughts: "I have to give props to Horry Electric. The women there have literally watched me grow up. They've attended school events I was in. They've bought Girl Scout cookies from me," Kourtney says. "They've been there. When a crisis does come up, their support is always there."

Kourtney recalls one harrowing night when she passed out at her



grandmother's house. "When I finally came to, besides my mom rubbing my face, the first person I saw was Miss Elaine Fulmer," her mother's supervisor at the time, now retired.

"She and her husband were standing over me. It wasn't Christmastime, but I was asking her for something she makes called reindeer food—it's pretzels and white chocolate and stuff," Kourtney says, laughing at the memory. "It was just a really weird thought. Very odd."

Kourtney says her mom's fellow member service reps have been supportive at times like when her mother has to leave work to pick her up when she's discharged from a hospital: "They're just like, 'OK, we've got you. We'll cover you.'"

Kolton returns their favors when she can. "I try to help wherever I can if they need me," she says.

### Family near and far

Kolton also credits her ex-husband, the children's father, who lives in Connecticut. "Anything for the kids," as he says.

Kourtney reminds her mom, "Let's not forget our church community!"

Kolton agrees: "They're in constant prayer for her," she says. "We attend Bethel AME and then there's Church of God on Cultra Road. They always remember. They're always praying for Kourtney."

Kourtney takes the praise higher: "It's not me and it's not the doctors. It's bigger—it's God," Kourtney says. "I can't take responsibility for this. God and people praying have gotten me through tough times and I'm blessed to still be here."

As if to add an "amen," from across the room her mother intones, "Pray for grace and mercies."







COURTESY KOLTAN WADE

## 'I am too young to feel this old'

**KOURTNEY WADE** is like most young ladies in Horry County. She's a major fan of the Grand Strand: "I really enjoy going to the beach," she says. "I love being around water."

She's also a serious film buff. "I'm really into movies. That's where my passion is. Like, when it's awards season, when everybody talks about the Super Bowl and stuff ... 'Eh, I don't really get into that. I like the Golden Globes, the SAG (Screen Actors Guild) Awards and the Oscars.'"

She's smart. "I like literature," she says. "I really like English."

A favorite recent read is *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot, the story of an African American woman whose cancer cells were harvested without her consent and used to create an immortal cell line for scientific experimentation that led to many groundbreaking scientific discoveries.

Kourtney notes, "They took her cells to space and they still multiplied. They didn't die. It's insane. It's really good."

Bright and engaging in conversation, Kourtney is also, as her mother says, "just naturally beautiful." And, although Kourtney turned 28 in July, her mother adds, "She looks 16."

Diagnosed with Type I diabetes at age 15, Kourtney is still relatively small today due to chronic gastroparesis (GP).

Yet with her fierce, fighting spirit, Kourtney seems fully capable of making a Henrietta Lacks-level contribution in her own lifetime. One possibility? Helping folks learn about chronic

Koltan Wade with her daughter, Kourtney, who has lived with Type 1 diabetes for 13 years, and sons Kollin and Kirk (right).

illnesses.

"I like using the knowledge I've gained about health matters to educate people," she says. "If there's something they don't understand and it gets kind of lost in the medical lingo, I break it down so they understand. I like to help people that way."

And while she's frustrated that there's not yet a cure for diabetes, Kourtney praises the hard work of health care providers of all stripes—particularly one group: "The people who really get overlooked are the nurses. They are the ones who keep it going," she says. "They've taken classes in dealing with panicky patients so they can calm you down. Yeah, I definitely have a special place in my heart for nurses, for sure."

The story at right outlines a few things Kourtney wants to help people understand about chronic illnesses like diabetes and GP. As she notes, "Thirteen years of diabetes, five years with the GP—it's pretty intense."

Fortunately, her determination is equally intense. "Just because my body is not 100 percent, it doesn't mean my mind isn't!" Kourtney says.

"I feel like I'm ready to retire. I'm just ready to board an airplane and fly to Hawaii. But I can't pack it in just yet."

**Koltan Wade with her daughter, Kourtney, during a multiple-week hospital admission in 2017.**



KIRKLAND A. WADE

## What Kourtney wants you to know

**ON LIFE SUPPORT:** Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes are chronic diseases that affect how our bodies regulate blood sugar, or glucose, which feeds a body's cells. To enter cells, glucose requires insulin. Type 1 diabetes sufferers don't produce insulin—at all.

As Kourtney Wade knows firsthand, "There isn't a quick fix for Type 1 diabetes." Type 2, she notes, "is completely reversible and preventable. Every other TV commercial is talking about, 'If you have type 2, you can still control your A1C' with meds, and that's not so with Type 1."

"Insulin is not a cure. Insulin is like being on life support—not just life support but very expensive life support," she says. A one-month vial of insulin without insurance is about \$300, says Kourtney, who notes that people still die for lack of insulin. Supplies like CGMs (continuous glucose meters) are pricey, too.

**TRUST HER, SHE KNOWS:** Type 1 diabetes sufferers can face complications such as DKA (diabetic ketoacidosis). "It's when your blood sugar gets so high that your blood becomes acidic and harms your organs," she explains.

Then there's GP (gastroparesis), when the stomach takes too long to empty food. GP is not widely understood, so Kourtney often has some explaining to do: "When I tell people, 'I'm sorry but I can't drink water,' they say, 'What do you mean you can't drink water?!' And I'm like, 'Oh, I have to go over this again.'"

**RELAX!** "A lot of people are afraid to be around me without Mom. Or to do or bring something without her permission. I'm like, 'You guys, I'm 28! Let's not forget that—yet!'"

As for gift-giving, her mother, Koltan Wade, says friends eventually figure that one out: "They'll say, 'Well, how about an iTunes card?'"

"Which is always great!" Kourtney says.



## Cooperative Youth Summit: A look into co-ops

### 'An amazing experience'

BY ABIGAIL MCNAIR  
CONWAY HIGH SCHOOL

**THE COOPERATIVE** Youth Summit was an amazing experience! The opportunities available during the trip were a true privilege that I'm happy to have participated in.

Some of my favorite activities were making a solar-powered car, putting together bags with WIRE (Women Involved in Rural Electrification), and meeting new people. The solar-powered car was sort of a race. We were given a can and other items to make the car.



Kelly Collins (left) and Abigail McNair work to build their Solar Rover.

Once we finished building, we put it to the test. It was cloudy, so it didn't move at first, but started zooming once the sun came out and we earned a spot in the Top Two.

I enjoyed making bags with WIRE. I felt I was really helping my community. Inside were things like a blanket, soap, and other hygiene products. I was proud to participate in this.

I got to meet new people who I hope to keep in touch with. I hope some of us see each other again in college. Thank you Horry Electric for your sponsorship of this trip. It truly was a blessing.

Horry Electric's Cooperative Youth Summit representatives (from left) Elizabeth Chiarovano, Kelly Collins, Abigail McNair, and Mandy Hooks in front of the Statehouse.

### 'I learned a lot'

BY ELIZABETH CHIAROVANO  
AYNOR HIGH SCHOOL

**I THOUGHT I** would enjoy myself on the Youth Summit. My expectations were met, and then some!

I learned a lot as far as the educational aspect. The solar power farm at Newberry Electric Cooperative and the Richland County Gas-to-Energy facility intrigued me. I am an aspiring environmental scientist and it was nice to see how they operate.

The Statehouse was my favorite part. I have a passion for politics, so it was interesting to learn what it's like to have a role in law-making. I really enjoyed the people we met that day.

I conquered fears on the zoo's ropes course, shared the excitement of the escape room in the Vista, and wandered through the mall with nice people I otherwise would not have met.

### Learning the co-op way

BY MANDY HOOKS  
ACADEMY OF TECHNOLOGY AND ACADEMICS

**THE YOUTH SUMMIT** was an amazing experience. I learned so much, from how being part of a co-op works, to how a bill becomes a law, to linemen safety. I got to ride in a bucket truck, which was my favorite part.

We also helped make backpacks full of supplies that students without a home in our state, and even county, need.

I have so many wonderful memories



Students ride in the line truck buckets at Mid-Carolina Electric Cooperative.

from this trip. I met so many great people and now consider some of them my friends. I'm so grateful for the opportunity.

### 'A better understanding'

BY KELLY COLLINS  
HCS EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL

**I WAS GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY** of a lifetime to travel to Columbia, as part of the Youth Summit, to learn more about cooperatives.

We learned what makes a co-op and how they help their members, while also visiting some exciting places. We got to go to Riverbanks Zoo, eat at Rioz Brazilian Steakhouse, and more.

The people I met were amazing. One of my favorite things we did was help WIRE make bags for less fortunate kids. I've learned how important it is to give back to the community.

The Youth Summit gives students a better understanding of cooperatives. This trip showed me how to appreciate what is given to me and how important it is to be part of a co-op.



JENNIFER HARMON