

Horry Electric Cooperative, Inc.

www.horryelectric.com

MAIN OFFICE

P.O. Box 119
Conway, SC 29528-0119
(843) 369-2211



**TO REPORT
POWER OUTAGES ONLY**
(843) 369-2212

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jennifer.cummings@horryelectric.com

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



Gaff-n-Go Lineworker's Rodeo

Horry Electric linemen among the best

OUR LINEMEN are an integral part of Horry Electric.

Without linemen, we could not provide the safe and reliable electric service our members expect and deserve. They're responsible for building and maintaining over 5,600 miles of line across Horry County. Our linemen go through extensive training, work in extreme weather conditions and give their all every day to keep the power on for more than 88,000 meters.

After winning their divisions of the South Carolina Lineman's Rodeo in March, six of our linemen traveled to Virginia to compete in the Gaff-n-Go Lineworker's Rodeo. This is an annual competition where lineworkers demonstrate the complex skills that are required in their daily work. The Gaff-n-Go attracts the best lineworkers along the East Coast.

Horry Electric was represented at the Gaff-n-Go by the Journeyman team of Chase Cox, Matt Savage and Brandon Shelley and Apprentices Scott Smith, Bryson Cooper and Dawson Mishoe.

Twenty-six teams competed in the Journeyman Division. Events included climbing skills, 600-amp vertical switch change out, primary insulator change out, transformer and streetlight change out and the hurtman rescue.

Horry Electric's journeyman team placed 9th overall.

Seventy-seven lineworkers competed in the Apprentice Division. Events included a written test of 50 questions

with a 15-minute time limit, climbing skills, bell insulator change out, CPR with AED and the hurtman rescue.

Scott Smith placed 5th overall in the Apprentice Division. Bryson Cooper finished 9th in Climbing Skills. Dawson Mishoe was awarded 3rd place in the Apprentice Hurtman Rescue and placed 21st overall.

Our linemen did a great job representing Horry Electric at our first Lineworker's Rodeo of this caliber. The rodeo consisted of competitors from electric co-ops, investor-owned utilities, municipals and contractors.

Proud of our guys!

I can't say enough about the hard work and dedication of our linemen. They leave the dinner table to restore an outage; they miss birthday parties and family outings; they pack up at a moment's notice to help other co-ops work storm recovery. No matter what, when the lights go out, they get to work!

The board of trustees and I couldn't be more proud of our linemen. If you happen to see them out in the field or in your community, be sure to thank a lineman.

Daniel B. Shelley, III

DANIEL B. SHELLEY, III
Executive Vice President and CEO



Horry Electric's Gaff-n-Go competitors (from left) Matt Savage, Brandon Shelley, Chase Cox, Scott Smith, Dawson Mishoe and Bryson Cooper pose for a quick picture before the competition.

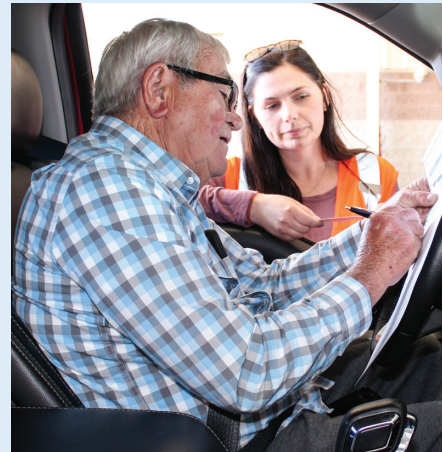
JENNIFER CUMMINGS

Annual Member Meeting snapshots

CHECK OUT some of our favorite pictures from our 2022 Annual Member Meeting!

Congratulations to our Grand Prize Winner, William (Bill) Wathen! He and his wife Laurie (pictured at right) are enjoying their 2018 E-Z Go electric golf cart. Thank you to all our of members who attended.

PHOTOS BY JOSH P. CROTZER/JENNIFER CUMMINGS





JENNIFER CUMMINGS

Horry Electric's Metering Supervisor Blake Strong shows the inside of a home generator panel. The panel connects the member's generator to the home circuitry.

Generating your own power? Let HEC know

A TOP PRIORITY for Horry Electric Cooperative is to safely provide reliable power to members.

Safety is our first concern, but it should also be a priority for members who are generating their own power and sending it over Horry Electric lines. Brian Chestnut, the cooperative's safety coordinator, says the risks lineworkers face during storm restoration are compounded by the energy being back fed onto lines by home or portable generators.

Both types of generators are a high concern during any storm, but especially during hurricane season, which runs from June 1 to Nov. 30.

While Horry Electric's linemen are trained to take necessary precautions before working on any kind of downed power lines, a generator is a different story.

Linemen do wear their personal protective equipment, but it's the members that can provide the most important protection to the line crews. Members should inform the cooperative that a generator is operating at their home.

"If you have a generator, never connect it directly to your home's circuits, unless it is wired for generator use and it has been done by a licensed electrician," says Burroughs Nobles, manager of operations. "Always plug appliances directly into properly grounded

generators, but never overload it."

Risks exist when home generators are self-installed without the expertise of a licensed electrician and without notifying the cooperative. This is when it is the most dangerous to the linemen working in the field.

Horry Electric employees are not the only ones in danger when a generator is installed improperly. Homeowners themselves may be at risk of electrocution, fire injury, property damage, or carbon monoxide poisoning, if they do not follow the necessary safety rules.

We understand that members like having generators to use during extended outages, but we want to keep everyone safe. We want to make sure a licensed electrician is involved and that if a generator is installed, the member should notify Horry Electric.

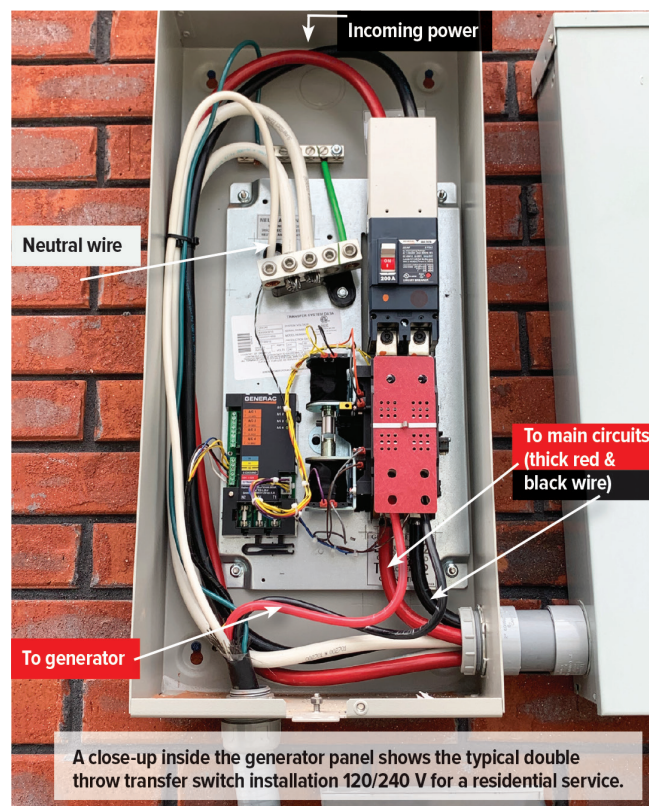
Thinking of installing a generator? Need some questions answered? Contact Horry Electric at (843) 369-2211 or visit horryelectric.com for more information.

Generator installation checklist

To ensure your safety and the safety of Horry Electric lineworkers, follow these guidelines when installing a generator at your home:

- ▶ Call Horry Electric first. We can answer your questions and provide guidance before you make your purchase.
- ▶ Involve a licensed electrician and/or a certified installer. We have a list of approved electrical contractors on our website under "Energy Programs."
- ▶ Make sure your home is properly wired for generator use.
- ▶ Ensure the installation has been permitted, inspected and approved by county building code officials.
- ▶ Inform Horry Electric when the installation is complete and someone will come to reconnect the power.

For more information on generator safety, visit horryelectric.com/services/generators.



A close-up inside the generator panel shows the typical double throw transfer switch installation 120/240 V for a residential service.

Going the extra mile

The member service department is here for you

“HORRY ELECTRIC, THIS IS AMY, how may I help you today?” This is the signature greeting members hear when they call Horry Electric. Amy is a member service representative (MSR) working in the service department, alongside 25 other employees. Theirs are the voices you hear on the phone and the faces you see when you walk in to one of our offices.

The position of a member service representative encompasses various responsibilities. MSRs work as cashiers and assist members face-to-face, by email and over the phone. A member’s first experience with the cooperative begins with the member service department and MSRs strive to make it a pleasant, helpful experience.

All in a day’s work

If you were to ask one of the MSRs what a typical day looks like for them, most would probably say there is nothing typical because every day and every situation is unique.

Their day starts promptly at 7:30 in the morning when the phone lines and drive-thru lanes open. While manning

the phones, the MSRs are opening and posting mail and night deposit payments, responding to member emails and online applications. “We are logged in to the phones at 7:30 a.m., and at 8 a.m., we are ready to meet with members face-to-face,” says Tara Singleton, a member service representative for over 16 years.

“Most of the time, any question or problem a member has starts with our department,” says Singleton. “From opening new accounts, transferring service, answering billing questions, guiding loved ones through closing the capital credits of a deceased member, to working with members on payment arrangements, high bills and energy saving tips—our daily tasks are ever-changing, and each member’s needs are different than the member before.”

Phone calls and email communications make up the largest portion of an MSR’s job. In 2021, Horry Electric’s member service department received over 112,000 calls with a 99.3% answer rate. The average hold time for 2021 was 17 seconds. It is extremely rare in today’s world to call a company

and speak to an agent in less than 20 seconds. We are extremely proud of these numbers. MSRs are ready and available to assist members with a live person, little wait time and a wealth of knowledge.

Extensive training

MSRs must be prepared to assist with any question a member may have. This knowledge cannot be achieved in a few days. “MSRs go through a four-step training manual program,” says Jodi Jordan, Horry Electric’s office manager. “They begin as a member service trainee, getting to know the cooperative business model, learning about safety and security, visiting every department within the co-op to understand the basics of each job, in addition to taking payments and delivering exceptional member service. Upon completion of each manual, they are tested on the

▼ Horry Electric’s member service department employees pose for a picture. Employees (from left) are Gail Morton, Lynn Elvis, Beth Rabon, Tara Singleton, Colby Hunsucker, Annette Harris, Jodi Jordan, Alison Jordan, Patty Martin, Kelli Carroll and Melissa Gore.



▲ The first faces members see at Horry Electric’s Conway office are (from left) Cordreka Valentine, Mellonie Doyle, Kolton Wade and Hazel Banderas-Barragan.





▲ Horry Electric's Socastee district office is made up of four member service representatives and the district office supervisor. Employees pictured are (from left) Keri Conner, Nicole Whittaker, Courtni Day (district office supervisor), Taylor Shirley and Jami Wittenburg.

skills and information they've learned. It takes at least eight years for an MSR to complete and test out of all of their training manuals."

A new MSR begins their training by observing a senior MSR. "This is so the new representative can listen and learn as the experienced MSR interacts with members over the phone, in person and by email," says Gail Morton, member service supervisor. "After the new MSR is trained to handle basic member inquiries, they will begin assisting members on their own. If they need assistance, a senior MSR is close by to help."

MSRs rotate through all the positions of the member service department. Rotating job duties allows each MSR to experience the service department, call center and cashier areas. Cross-training is an integral part of the member service training program. "I would say training never ends in this position. I learn something new every day," says Jami Wittenburg, a member service representative for over eight years.

"We are continuously learning and growing in the member service department. Rotating positions enables us to better serve, support and assist members. Knowing all aspects of the job and how to assist with any member request ensures fast, efficient and accurate member service," says Morton.

All hands on deck

An electric cooperative MSR is ready at any point to go into "storm mode." Whether it's an ice storm or a hurricane, "you have to be prepared to work long hours with very little sleep," says Kelli McDowell, call center supervisor.

These works of Mother Nature create an all hands on deck situation. During

a major storm, phone lines are manned 24 hours a day. "We may have to work different shifts, day or night, depending on the severity of the storm damage," says Colby Hunsucker, senior member service representative. "Our job duties may be totally different. For example, I've been assigned the task of helping cook meals for crews during storm restoration."

When in storm mode, MSRs are a support team for members and co-workers. "We leave our families at home and work long shifts to ensure our members, who are without power, are able to speak with a live person," says Jordan. MSRs provide up-to-date outage restoration information for members. "Storms can be scary to a lot of people and sometimes our members just need a friendly voice on the line to reassure them that we are working for them and they have not been forgotten," says Bridget Watson, an MSR for over 15 years.

Favorite part of the job

There is no denying that each MSR's favorite part of the job is the members. "Without our members, we wouldn't be

here," says Hazel Banderas-Barragan, an MSR for the last year. "I love being able to help members and co-workers solve a problem."

The members are our top priority and Horry Electric's MSRs are ready and willing to serve. "We are here to listen and empathize with members to resolve their concerns quickly," says Courtni Day, district office supervisor for over 15 years.

We never know what someone is going through, so we strive to go the extra mile. "When our members leave the office or hang up the phone, I want them to feel like they have been given the best member service. I love helping people and if I can make someone's day a little brighter, I feel I have succeeded in my job," says Singleton.

"We are human and sometimes we make mistakes, but we always have our members' best interest at heart," says Jordan. "We are committed to providing the best member service to every member we meet. We do our very best to make every in-person, telephone and online interaction a positive and informational experience."

If you have questions or need to speak with a member service representative, email service@horryelectric.com or call (843) 369-2211.

▼ The Call Center employees include (from left) Richard Floyd, Bridget Watson, Call Center Supervisor Kelli McDowell, Amy Grainger, Tracie Edwards and Matt Holmes.



JENNIFER CUMMINGS

WHO POWERS YOU?

Inspired by someone making a difference in our community?
Tell their story and they could win a prize.

We know our community is filled with unsung heroes who are making a difference. Let's celebrate them! This is your chance to honor the people who are making a real difference. Winners will be selected by a panel of judges based on the impact they have on our community. All entries must be submitted by July 31, 2022.

Grand Prize \$2,500

Your Local Co-op Prize \$500

**Horry Electric
Cooperative, Inc.**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Together, let's
celebrate the
power of
human
connections.



Visit ecsc.org/WhoPowersYou for full contest rules



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