

## Horry Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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

**MAIN OFFICE**  
P.O. Box 119  
Conway, SC 29528-0119  
369-2211



**TO REPORT  
POWER OUTAGES ONLY**  
369-2212

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Penelope D. Hinson  
[penelope.hinson@horryelectric.com](mailto:penelope.hinson@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

## The value of electricity continues to shine



**ELECTRICITY KEEPS US** connected. Consider all the necessities and conveniences we are able to enjoy because of the power lines that deliver power to the electric meter outside your home.

Take inventory of the entertainment type electronic devices in your home. This includes televisions, desktop and laptop computers, gaming consoles, video or music players, printers, iPads and even electronic readers like Nook or Kindle. Whether they are used every day or just occasionally, the electricity that keeps them working comes from your electric cooperative.

If you have a workshop, the power tools and machines you use to cut and shape your projects are either plugged in or recharged from the outlets connecting your household wiring to Horry Electric Cooperative's distribution system.

### Still a bargain

In addition to all the electronic devices you use in your home for entertainment, cooking cleaning and projects, you are also using the power we deliver to cover the basics like lighting, heating and cooling your home. That's a lot of power being used. The good news is that it's still a bargain, especially compared to other things we pay for regularly.

Since 2011, medical care, residential rental rates and education have increased at rates of 3 percent or more per year. Butter, meat and egg costs have been up by more than one to 2 percent annually, and even bread costs have risen better than a half point on average.

Electricity costs rise about 1 percent a year, but co-ops across the country have reported a decline in average residential use per household since 2010. That means we're doing more things with less energy.

### Making it even better

When it comes to value, electricity is a clear winner, and we're always looking for ways to work with you to make it even better. We encourage energy efficiency and promote technology designed to give members more control over their electricity use. If you haven't already tapped into MyEnergy Online to access your account information, we urge you to do so.

In addition to being able to view your daily energy use and track how it increases or decreases each day, you can sign up for alerts and reminders so you are aware of how much energy you are using every single day.

We also urge you to sign up to help Beat the Peak. By shifting energy use outside of peak times for energy use when the cost of power is high, you can help reduce the overall demand for power on the Horry Electric system.

Other online tools we make available to members provide an opportunity to understand how energy is being used in their homes and offers suggestions on how to be more efficient.

Our Advance Pay program is another option that is good for families, couples and individuals trying to live within their budgets. To learn more, visit [horryelectric.com](http://horryelectric.com) or give us a call at (843) 369-2211.

Electricity keeps us all connected. You can rest assured that we are always working to provide service that is reliable and affordable, plus offer programs that are of real value to our member—you, your family and your neighbors.

**JAMES P. "PAT" HOWLE**  
Executive Vice President/CEO

# How about some 'homegrown' renewable energy?

**TO MAKE SOLAR** energy more accessible to members, Horry Electric Cooperative made Community Solar available one year ago. Many members jumped at the chance to purchase locally generated renewable energy—and you still can, too!

Community Solar lets you share in the benefits of solar without having to really do anything! We've done all the work.

Horry Electric built a 240-kilowatt (KW) Community Solar farm across the street from our Conway office on Cultra Road. All eligible Horry Electric residential members now have the opportunity to purchase a maximum of 5 shares of solar power from the farm. It's a terrific option for members.

## Community Solar Advantages

- ▶ It's hassle free. No holes in your roof. No system to set up and maintain.
- ▶ The Cooperative assumes all liabilities and maintenance on the solar system.
- ▶ No solar panel cleaning.
- ▶ No safety concerns.
- ▶ No burdensome homeowner association restrictions.
- ▶ Subscriptions are transferable from location to location with the member.
- ▶ Community Solar creates clean energy that is environmentally friendly.

## How it works

Decide how many blocks of solar power are right for you. If you'd like more Community Solar later and it is available, you can select additional blocks.

Complete the subscription agreement. Then, pay the non-refundable upfront charge of \$100 per block subscribed. You have the option of subscribing from one to five blocks at the monthly price of \$25 per block.

Start receiving solar-energy credits on your monthly electric bill. Each month, you will receive credit for a portion of the production from the Community Solar farm. Your portion is based on how many solar blocks you have selected.

## Pricing

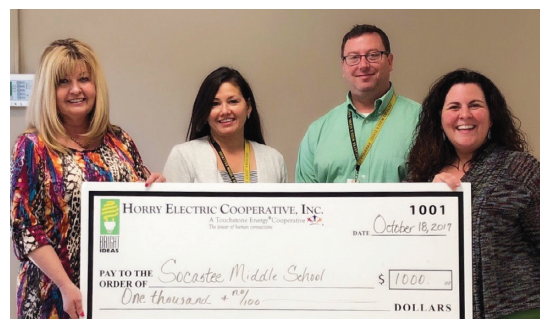
Non-refundable  
upfront charge—**\$100 per block**  
Monthly charge—**\$25 per block**  
Monthly credit—  
**Average of 150 kWh**

## How much do I need?

The average residential member uses approximately 1,200 kWh per month.

Please note: These figures are only averages; solar energy production will fluctuate month to month based on weather and time of year.

**Ready to sign up? Just call us at (843) 369-2211 and ask about Horry Electric Community Solar! Visit [HorryElectric.com](http://HorryElectric.com) to download a Community Solar FAQ sheet and a Community Solar Agreement.**



Michelle Wood (right) of Socastee Middle School receives a \$1,000 Bright Ideas grant from Horry Electric's Toni Gore (left) last fall. With them are Wood's team members on the Robotics and Rubik's Cube Warrior Technology Club project, Sharon Arruda and Robert Pisaniello.

## Grants reward innovative teachers

**INNOVATION** is one of the values that Touchstone Energy Cooperatives, such as Horry Electric emphasize, and it's one we reward, too. Since 2007, we've sponsored the Bright Ideas grant program for Horry County teachers, providing funding for innovative classroom-based education projects.

Bright Ideas grants are intended to fund projects outside normal public school funding parameters and can be made available to all disciplines in grades K-12 in Horry County. A school may submit an application, and teachers are limited to one application per year.

**Teachers, you can download a Bright Ideas application at [HorryElectric.com](http://HorryElectric.com). For program details, email [Toni.Gore@HorryElectric.com](mailto:Toni.Gore@HorryElectric.com).**



Grant winner Jarrin Martus (second from right) with fellow Bright Ideas team members Lindsay Lennon (left) and Kayla Maxwell and HEC's Toni Gore at Ten Oaks Middle School in Myrtle Beach last fall. They received \$645 for their innovative project, STEM Class-Solar Electric Cars.

## HORRY EXTRA

### Post no bills (on poles)

An Horry Electric lineworker explains why you should never post signs on poles. We also offer safe tree-planting tips for spring and a story, "Bug" springs eternal," about a local gymnast (and her mother), who never gave up in their pursuit of a scholarship. It's all in this month's Horry Extra section, which begins on page 20A.



WALTER ALLREAD



A bird's eye view of the Community Solar farm across the street from Horry Electric's Conway office.





## Post no bills

### Lineworker explains why signs on poles always spell trouble

**POWER LINE POLES** may seem like an inviting place to post a garage sale sign or mount your satellite dish. Please don't! It is not only illegal to do so but such attachments also pose some very dangerous conditions for Horry Electric lineworkers.

You may be thinking, "What's one little sign going to hurt?" What you may not have thought about are obstacles, such as garage sale signs and satellite dishes, nails, pins, and staples make climbing a pole extremely dangerous for cooperative linemen. Working on or near power lines is dangerous enough without added hazards on poles.

During ice storms or other major outages, obstacles like these make restoring power more difficult for crews, even delaying the process. Horry Electric Cooperative's best advice is to choose another location to post signs, banners, or any other objects. But, if you decide to set your own post, you must get the property owner's permission, of course, and call 811 before digging.

#### Finding the trouble

Electric co-ops and other utility companies are allowed to post identification tags on their own poles. Lineworkers like HEC's Billy Cook look for these tags when they're out on trouble calls, often in the middle of the night.

Horry line crew leaders and servicemen do have computers in their trucks that are linked to detailed digital system maps, which help them and System Control operators pinpoint problems on Horry Electric's 5,100-plus miles of lines. But, when lineworkers find the pole on the system map, they still need to verify it's the right one. That's why it's important to be able to see the pole tag. If there's a sign in the way, spotting the tag can be tricky.

It gets even trickier—and more

dangerous—if lineworkers have to climb the pole to make repairs, says Cook, a serviceman for the co-op. And yes, linemen still climb. Bucket trucks sometimes can't be used.

"If you have to climb a pole, the signs are in your way," Cook says. "You can't get to it because you've got to take whatever (has been nailed to the pole) down—if you can take it down."

#### It gets worse

Cook has even seen worse than signs on poles: "I ran into a situation one time where a guy had a whole wall built onto a pole," he says. "We had to have him take it down. There wasn't any way to get a bucket to it!"

What's left behind after obstacles are removed can be even worse. Every little tack or nail could spell disaster for a

**HEC Serviceman Billy Cook waves, showing the leather glove that covers the rubberized glove that actually protects his hand from contact with hot lines. One small nail hole in a glove could spell disaster.**



lineman. Why?

"They tear your gloves up," explains Cook.

Linemen wear insulated gloves and sleeve covers to protect themselves from accidental contact with live wires. While the gloves are covered by leather work gloves, even a small tear would be big enough for a fatal contact with an energized line.

So, think about that before you go to tack a yard-sale sign on a co-op pole. The guys who you depend on to keep your lights on are depending on you to do your part.

Besides, it's the law—the South Carolina Code of Laws, to be precise. See Section 57-25-10. "Unlawful to display, place or affix posters within right-of-way."

**If you see a sign or object attached to a utility pole in the Horry Electric service area, please call the co-op at (843) 369-2211 to report it. Do not attempt to remove the danger yourself. If you'll provide us with the exact location and, if possible, the HEC inventory number on the pole, we'll take care of the rest.**





## Get educated about electrical safety at HorryElectric.com

Safety is a priority at Horry Electric, and our goal is to educate members and the community at large about the potential dangers and hazards associated with electricity.

Visit [HorryElectric.com](http://HorryElectric.com) for information that can keep you and your loved ones safe.

Go to the Storm Central section to access our Safety and Reliability page. There, you can download brochures full of life-saving tips. Did you know, for instance, that “warm electrical cords or light switches” are a danger sign? Are you up to speed on how to use a portable generator safely? The Safety and Reliability page has the answers.

### Preventative maintenance

At HEC, we go to great lengths—more than 5,100-plus miles of lines, in fact—to perform preventative maintenance on our distribution system. A proactive approach is the best tool against outages, but there are outages caused by acts of nature, equipment failure and even vehicular accidents that are beyond the control of the Co-op.

Horry Electric Cooperative cannot guarantee continuous and uninterrupted electric service and will not be liable for loss or damage to any member’s equipment caused by any

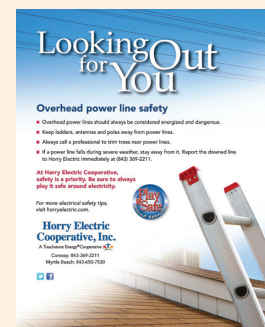
failure to supply electricity or by any interruption or reversal of the supply of electricity if due to any cause beyond the reasonable control of the Cooperative. These causes include, but are not limited to acts of nature, equipment failure and vehicular accidents.

Members should immediately notify the Cooperative of any defect in service or of any trouble or irregularity in the electric supply.

### Are you protected?

Many losses occur due to acts of nature or equipment failure beyond the control of the Cooperative. Individual members must provide their own protection against these losses.

Learn more at [HorryElectric.com](http://HorryElectric.com) in the Storm Central section.



You never know what you’ll find attached to a power pole—illegally. Our field editor found a silver spoon on a pole (below) near Longs. Another pole nearby had a No Trespassing sign nailed to it, ironically. Signs often block the view of co-op pole tags, which lineworkers need to see to verify that they’re in the right location when repairing equipment or restoring service.



WALTER ALFREDA



## ‘Bug’ springs eternal

Aynor teen gymnast didn’t give up on dream to compete in college

**BRASHLYN JOHNSON**, an Aynor High School senior, has been training in gymnastics since age 3 and competing since 7. Honing her skills, about six years ago she earned Level 10 status, the highest level in the USA Gymnastics Junior Olympics Program. All along, Brashlyn held onto a dream—to compete at the college level.

Brashlyn—known as “Bug” to family since she was little—was one of three local girls who scored well enough in the 2017 Region 8 Level 10 Regional Championships to advance to a national competition in Indianapolis in May. Doing well there, she knew, might have landed her a scholarship.

Unfortunately, Indianapolis didn’t go as planned. Brashlyn turned in a solid performance in the vault, uneven bars, balance beam and floor exercises but did not place. It’s tough, of course, if you’re facing competitors from eight regions across the country—many from states with collegiate-level gymnastics programs, which South Carolina does not.

But Bug and her mom, Tammy Johnson, would not give up. They kept their eyes on the prize even as Bug watched as two gymnast friends, Stacie Harrison and Leighton Varnadore, earned scholarships.

Bug just kept training, training, training. And, Tammy kept looking, looking, looking for other scholarship opportunities.

Finally, this fall, their efforts paid off: Brashlyn was awarded a partial, four-year gymnastics scholarship from West Chester University, outside of Philadelphia. To say she felt like doing a backflip would be an understatement. “I felt relieved and happy because I finally knew that the hard work I’ve done in gymnastics will help pay for my education,” she said.

She’s been training hard since receiving the good news: “I have been working on being consistent and perfecting small details because ‘hitting’ a routine is so important at the college level,” Bug says.

She praises her family, especially her mom and her grandmother, Horry Electric member Betty Johnson, for being two of her greatest cheerleaders. “I thank the Lord first who has had a plan for me all along and has blessed me in so many ways. I would like to thank my parents for supporting me and spending countless time and money for me to achieve my goals, and I thank all my coaches through the years who have had a part in building me into a talented gymnast,” Bug says.

After college, she’d like to become a physician’s assistant and maybe coach gymnastics. For now, she’s living her dream—and urging other young folks not to give up on theirs. “Goals are so important to me. I write my goals down so that I can see them! My advice to young athletes is to work hard and always set goals. It is always best to have something to work towards. Even if you don’t achieve the goal as quickly as you would like, DO NOT give up,” says Bug. “Keep working hard!”

“Even through the hard times, I always prayed and asked for God’s help when I struggled. And when I succeeded, I thanked Him.”

Brashlyn “Bug” Johnson performs an aerial on balance beam. The Aynor High senior recently earned a gymnastics scholarship from West Chester University.



COURTESY TAMMY JOHNSON