

Horry Electric Cooperative, Inc.

horryelectric.com

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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

Recap of new rate structure

Three frequently asked questions from members



THE PAST FIVE MONTHS since the restructured rate announcement have been busy. As I mentioned in the August edition of *South Carolina Living*, we have worked to inform members through magazine articles, letters and emails.

Since the restructured rate went into effect with members' September use, which appears on their October statements, I wanted to take the opportunity to address three of the most frequently asked questions we have received from members:

1. Will I be charged \$12 per kilowatt (kW) for each peak hour?

No, the Peak Charge component is for the single highest one (1) hour of energy used during peak hours in the billing period.

Members will only be charged \$12 per kilowatt (kW) for the highest one hour. This is not a daily charge.

When you receive your statement this month, you will see the date and hour your energy use peaked during your billing cycle. For example, if your billing period ran from Sept. 10 to Oct. 10 and your energy use peaked on Sept. 15 between 4-5 p.m. using 5.6 kilowatts (kW), your Peak Charge would be \$67.20.

Remember, the Peak Charge is only for the single highest hour of the month during peak hours. The remaining hours will be billed at \$0.069 per kilowatt hour (kWh).

2. Why did you pick these peak hours?

The summer peak hours of 3 to 6 p.m. April 1 through Oct. 31 and winter peak hours of 6 to 9 a.m. Nov. 1 through March 31 were chosen based on when

electric use in South Carolina is at its highest and most expensive. The hottest part of the summer months is during the afternoon, typically in the 3 to 6 p.m. window. In the winter, the coldest part of the day is the morning hours, typically between 6 to 9 a.m.

3. Are you telling me I have to turn everything off?

No, we are not saying members can't use electricity during the peak hours. The great part about this rate is it gives members the opportunity to save on their bill by shifting some of their use to outside of peak hours.

Members can use all the electricity they need at a highly reduced rate for 21 hours of the day. During the three daily peak hours, we encourage members to be mindful of their use. Our recommendation is to avoid using all major appliances at the same time. This includes HVAC systems, electric water heaters, electric clothes dryers, pool pumps and EV chargers. We call this "stacking." If you get home at 5 p.m. and that's when you need to cook dinner, try to wait until after 6 p.m. to dry clothes or take hot showers.

Peak times change Nov. 1

Remember, peak times will change to winter hours on Nov. 1. You will want to be mindful of your use during the 6 to 9 a.m. hours through March 31.

If you have questions about your new statement or need more information, visit horryec.info/rate-center or call (843) 369-2211.

DANIEL B. SHELLEY, III
 Executive Vice President and CEO

Employees save with new rate

BY JOSH P. CROTZER

Some Horry Electric Cooperative employees have taken the lead on adjusting their home energy use during peak hours, testing the co-op's restructured rate, that was implemented in September, and making it fit their lifestyle.

How's that been going for them since their tests began in August 2023? Here are some of their experiences.



JENNIFER CUMMINGS

Tracy and William Lambert

From skeptic to savings

To say Tracy Lambert was skeptical about Horry Electric's restructured rate would be an understatement. So would saying it proved beneficial.

"My first thought was to say, 'I'm not going to do it,'" she

says. "Evenings between 3 and 6 p.m. (summer peak hours) is a busy time when you've got a household this size. We're a family of four, but sometimes we have as many as ten at our house."

But her husband William, a line crew foreman, convinced her to try it for a month. They discovered that with a few minor changes, such as delaying laundry duties and preparing supper later, they were able to save an average of \$40-\$60 per month.

"Now I try to remind everybody in the house about the time frame," she says. "It's worked out well."

While lifestyle adjustments helped during the summer, William believes a simple tool, one he could set and forget, made the difference in the winter (Nov. 1–March 31) when the peak hours are 6–9 a.m.

"I honestly think the timer on the water heater has been the most beneficial," he says.

A Loris legacy

Blake Stevens' great grandfather was one of the first members connected to Horry Electric Cooperative. Now, Stevens is one of the first to take advantage of the restructured rate at his home in Loris.

"It's been an easy transition," says Stevens, HEC's supervisor of overhead conversion and vegetation management. "I like having control."

With a smart thermostat and a timer on the water heater, Stevens schedules his two largest energy-consuming appliances to decrease energy

consumption during peak hours, time periods when energy demand is at its peak. Stevens says that control has helped him save about 15% on his residential power bill since going on the rate.

Stevens has also been analyzing how the restructured rate will impact energy costs for their tobacco farm.

"On a farm, there is only so much you can control," he explains. "But the restructured rate gives us more control than we had in the past."



JOSH P. CROTZER

Blake Stevens

Floyd's fish keep swimming

The only thing that doesn't shut down at Richard Floyd's home during Horry Electric's peak hours is the goldfish pond pump.

Floyd, a power control technician for HEC, was eager to embrace the restructured rate at a house built in 1971, which he says is "by no means energy efficient."

"It was not uncommon for us to have a power bill in the winter exceeding \$400," says Floyd. "Anything that has an opportunity to reduce our bill was something I was interested in trying out."

Floyd said he and his wife fully committed to the experiment with timers on his water heater and pool pump and a smart thermostat in their home.

"Literally, the only thing that consumed electricity in this house at first [during peak hours] was a ceiling fan and the goldfish pump," says Floyd. "It's made a big difference. My highest bill was \$200 in the winter, so we've effectively cut it in half."



JOSH P. CROTZER

Richard Floyd

Co-ops power communities with purpose

Celebrating membership during National Co-op Month

COMMUNITY IS THE CENTER of the electric cooperative. Communities come in all forms. Some are bound by geographical proximity, others are based on shared interests or identities. Some can be found in virtual spaces such as social media groups. Regardless of why they exist, communities bring people together and create a sense of belonging.

As members of Horry Electric Cooperative, you are part of the electric cooperative community that we are proud to serve.

This October, more than 30,000 cooperatives across the United States are celebrating National Co-op Month. It's a time to reflect on the traits that set cooperatives apart from other types of businesses. More importantly, it's a time to celebrate the power of co-op membership.

Electric cooperatives are not-for-profit utilities that are built by the communities they serve. For Horry Electric, our mission has always been to provide members with safe, affordable and reliable electricity. We care about your quality of life and because we are locally operated, we're uniquely suited to meet our members' evolving energy needs.

Beyond the business of electricity, employees and board trustees (members)

are equally invested in our local community. Why? Because we live, work and go to church here, too. That's why we work hard to support local youth programs and scholarships, economic development projects, charitable incentives and other programs that make our community a better place to call home.

All co-ops, including Horry Electric, are guided by seven cooperative principles that embody the values and spirit of the cooperative movement. These principles are a framework to help all co-ops navigate challenges and opportunities while remaining true to our purpose:

1. Voluntary and Open Membership

Co-op membership is open to anyone who can use the co-op's services.

2. Democratic Member Control

Members make decisions that shape the cooperative by voting for members to serve on the board of trustees. Why? Co-ops are created by the members, for the members.

3. Members' Economic Participation

Members contribute money to the co-op to make sure it runs smoothly now and in the future. This happens through paying your energy bills. We also return



PHOTOS BY JENNIFER CUMMINGS

Advanced Line Technician Chad Tyler gives a thumbs up on a job site. Linemen are proud to power your lives.

any excess revenue to the members in the form of capital credits.

4. Autonomy and Independence Since co-ops are owned and governed by the people they serve, we act in the best interests of our members, unlike distant corporations and shareholders.

5. Education, Training and Information

Co-ops continuously educate employees so they have the training and information they need to make the co-op successful. Education and information also carries over to the communities when co-ops attend school career days or informative community group meetings.

6. Cooperation Among Cooperatives

Co-ops share with and learn from other cooperatives. We help each other in times of need because we want other co-ops to thrive.

7. Concern for Community

All cooperatives work for the greater good of the local communities they serve and give back to help them grow and succeed.

This October, as we celebrate National Co-op Month and the power of membership, we hope you will recognize the many aspects that set electric cooperatives apart. Our mission is safe, affordable, reliable power. Our purpose is people—the local communities we're proud to serve.



Employees (from left) Jason Carroll, Kent Donald and Jake Jensen band together to clean up trash along Depot Road in Conway.

Cybersecurity tips for a digital world

October is National Cybersecurity Awareness Month

HOUSEHOLDS WITH INTERNET ACCESS own an average of 17 connected devices. (Go ahead—count your own. We know you want to.) This includes a wide range of electronics, from smartphones and computers to streaming devices, smart speakers, home assistants and more. All those devices greatly expand the possibilities for bad actors who want to take advantage of our increasing reliance on internet-connected technologies.

Horry Electric is committed to ensuring our local systems are safe and secure. We routinely monitor and manage cyber risks and work together with other co-ops to share the latest advancements in cybersecurity measures. You can help, too.

When co-op members work together to stay safe online, we lower the risk of cyber threats to our electric systems, online accounts and sensitive data.

October is National Cybersecurity Awareness Month, and while good cyber habits should be practiced year-round, here are a few cybersecurity tips to help protect you online.

Learn how to spot and report phishing attempts

Phishing occurs when criminals use phony emails, direct messages or other types of digital communications that lure you to click a bad link or download a harmful attachment. Signs of phishing include suspicious emails or messages that include urgent language, an offer that seems too good to be true, a generic greeting, poor grammar or an unusual sender address. If you spot a phishing attempt, report it to your



PHOTO BY JENNIFER CUMMINGS

Information Technology Manager Dale Johnson works to securely set up cooperative iPhones and iPads.

email or messaging platform as soon as possible—and don't forget to block the sender.

Create strong, unique passwords

Remember, a longer password always beats a complex password when it comes to security. Strong passwords contain at least 12 characters and include a mix of letters, numbers and symbols. Create unique passwords for each online account you manage, and use phrases you can easily remember. If you need help remembering, consider using a password management app.

Enable multi-factor authentication when available

Multi-factor authentication (or two-factor authentication) adds an extra layer of security to your online accounts. These extra security steps can include facial recognition, fingerprint access or one-time codes sent to your email

or phone. Regardless of which type of authentication, it makes it harder for criminals to access your account.

Update software regularly

Software and internet-connected devices, including personal computers, smartphones and tablets, should always be current on updates to reduce the risk of infection from ransomware and malware. When possible, configure devices to automatically update or notify you when an update is available.

Let's all do our part to stay cyber smart and create a safer digital world. Visit staysafeonline.org to learn about additional cybersecurity tips. Want to know if a hacker has your information? Visit haveibeenpwned.com for password info and details. If the date is recent, change your password for the breached site and make sure to practice using different passwords for different sites.



Large farm equipment could come in contact with overhead power lines. It's important to know what to do to avoid electrical accidents.

PHOTOS BY JENNIFER CUMMINGS

Go above and beyond for a safe harvest

TODAY'S FARMING WORLD relies on massive machinery and equipment with GPS and auto-guidance systems. Even with these modern conveniences, farming is among the most dangerous jobs in our country.

During a busy harvest season, the familiar sights around the farm can easily fade into the background, and farm workers can overlook the power lines overhead. The field equipment's size, height and extensions make the machines vulnerable to contacting power lines.

If a piece of equipment has come in contact with overhead lines, the only reason to exit it is if it is on fire. If that happens, jump off the equipment with your feet together. You want to make sure you do this without touching the machinery and the ground at the same time. Then, still keeping your feet together, hop to safety as you leave the area.

Other electric hazards to be watchful of on a farm include exposed underground power lines, defective wiring in farm buildings, extension cords and grain bins. If you plan to install new grain bins or you're concerned about the location of power lines, contact Horry Electric Cooperative.

Staying alert, focused and knowledgeable about potential hazards



and safety procedures is crucial. Failing to notice them can lead to deadly accidents.

To ensure a safer harvest season, safeelectricity.org recommends these tips to avoid electrical accidents on the farm:

- ▶ **Exercise caution near power lines.** Be careful when raising augers or the bed of grain trucks around power lines.
- ▶ **Use spotters when operating large machinery near power lines.** Ensure the spotters do not touch the machinery while it is moving near power lines.
- ▶ **Lower equipment extensions, portable augers or elevators before moving or transporting equipment.** Do not raise equipment, such as ladders, poles or rods into power lines. Remember that non-metallic materials such as lumber, tree limbs, ropes and hay can conduct

electricity, especially when damp, dusty or dirty.

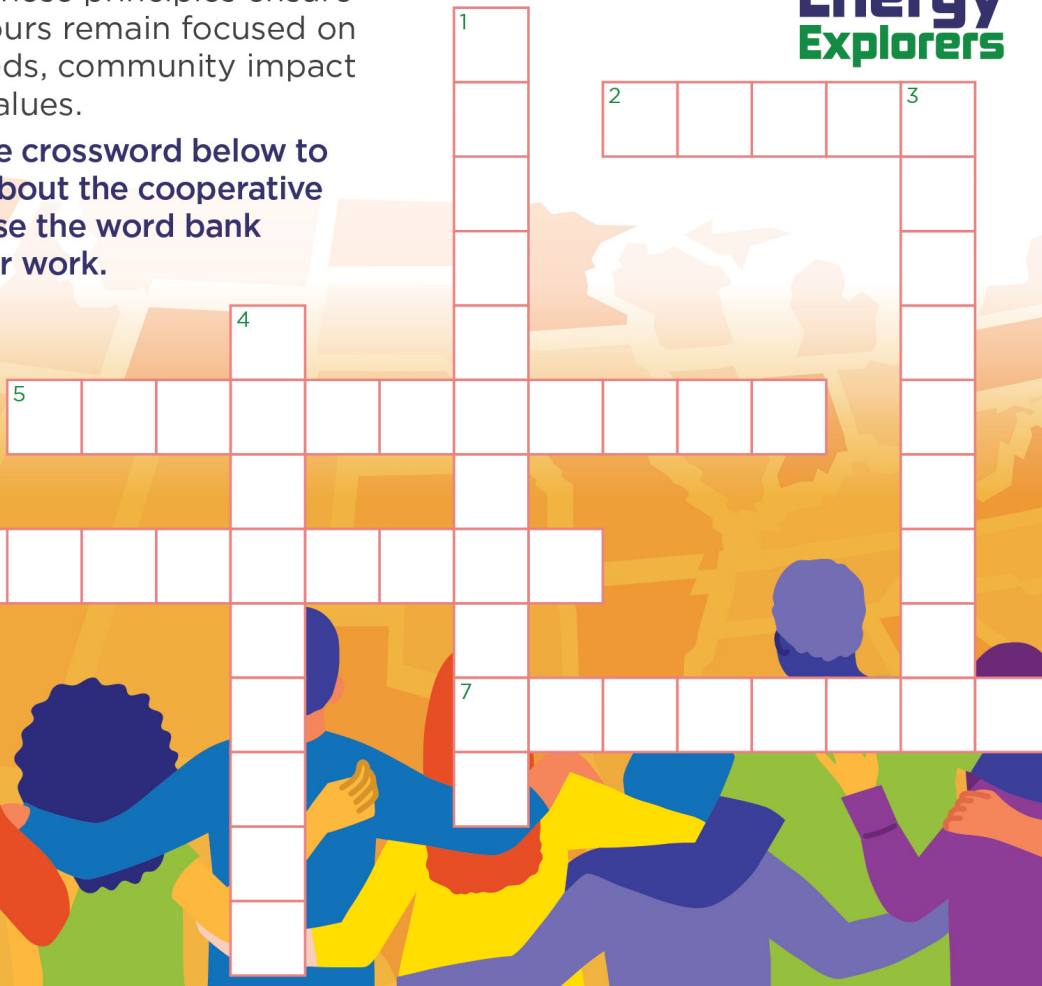
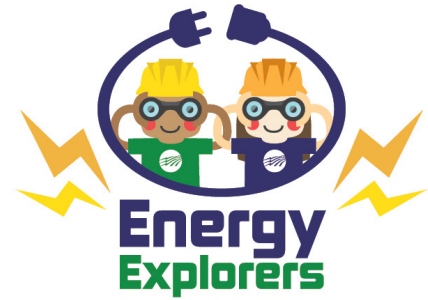
- ▶ **Never attempt to raise or move power lines to clear a path.** Doing so could result in electric shock or death.
- ▶ **Avoid using metal poles inside bins.** Don't use metal poles to break up bridged grain inside or around bins.
- ▶ **Hire qualified electricians.** Ensure that qualified electricians handle work on drying equipment and other farm electrical systems.
- ▶ **Don't exit equipment that has come in contact with overhead lines.**

Awareness of your surroundings and planning safe equipment routes can significantly reduce the risk of accidents. Even with GPS and auto-steering, it's important that farm workers keep a close eye on the equipment's location and are ready to take action if necessary.

SEVEN COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLES CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Did you know electric co-ops are guided by a set of seven cooperative principles? These principles ensure co-ops like ours remain focused on member needs, community impact and co-op values.

Complete the crossword below to learn more about the cooperative principles. Use the word bank to check your work.



ACROSS

2. Cooperation Among Cooperatives: Co-ops _____ and learn from other co-ops.
5. Autonomy & Independence: Co-ops are _____ and can operate on their own.
6. Member Economic Participation: Members _____ money to ensure the co-op runs smoothly.
7. Open & Voluntary Membership: Co-op membership is open to _____ .

DOWN

1. Concern for Community: Co-ops give back to their local _____ to help them thrive and grow.
3. Education, Training & Information: Co-ops focus on _____ to ensure employees and members have the info they need.
4. Democratic Member Control: Members get to make _____ about the co-op.

ANSWER KEY

2 ACROSS: SHARE 6 ACROSS: CONTRIBUTE 7 ACROSS: EVERYONE 1 DOWN: COMMUNITIES 3 DOWN: EDUCATION 4 DOWN: DECISIONS 5 ACROSS: INDEPENDENT