



December 2015

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Albemarle Sounds

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Corporate Services Manager Hired



Clarissa Perry has been promoted to manager of corporate services for Albemarle EMC.

Clarissa Perry has been promoted to fill the position of manager of corporate services for Albemarle Electric Membership Corporation.

She replaces Jonetta Long, who will retire in January after working more than four decades for the co-op.

Perry will be responsible for overseeing billing, finance and member services. She started with the co-op in 1988 as a consumer services representative. In 1992, she was promoted to the work order clerk position. In 1997, she became the co-op's work order accountant.

"Clarissa's experience in the finance department as well as her background in member services made her an ideal fit to head the corporate services department," said Gary Ray, general manager of Albemarle EMC. "We are excited to welcome Clarissa to our management team."

Charity Golf Tournament is a Success

Forty-eight players turned out for Albemarle EMC's eighth-annual Light Up Christmas charity golf tournament.



Held at the Sound Golf Links at Albemarle Plantation, the tournament

raised more than \$15,000. The funds were used to purchase toys for the co-op's Christmas toy drive.

"It was another great tournament," said Gary Ray, general manager of Albemarle EMC. "We had great participation, great weather and were able to raise a considerable amount of money for a worthy cause."

The Altec Inc. team won first place with a score of 56. Pepsi, of Elizabeth

City, came in second with a score of 57. The N.C. Electric Membership Corporation team came in third with a score of 58.

The toys were purchased by Albemarle EMC employees who volunteered their time. The toys were delivered to families that have been identified by the local school systems.

Closed for Christmas

**We will be closed
Dec. 24-25 and Jan. 1.
Happy holidays!**

Thank You Toy Drive Sponsors!

Albemarle EMC offers its deepest appreciation to the following sponsors of the Light Up Christmas toy drive golf tournament. Through their generosity, we were able to raise more than \$15,000. The funds were used to provide toys to families in need of a helping hand this holiday season.

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Co-op Attends School Event



Engineer Kevin Heath and Lineman Matt Byrum recently demonstrated the operation of a bucket truck at Grandy Primary School, in Camden.

Substation Course Completed



Lineman Apprentice Ken Winslow, Jr. (right) recently completed 32 hours of training to receive his certification of completion for Substation Training.

Want to Make Bill Paying Easier?

Albemarle EMC offers Automatic Bank and Credit Card Draft.

Call 1 (252) 426-5735 for more information.

Albemarle EMC is at Your Service

How Albemarle EMC works to provide its members with the highest-quality service possible.

What Causes Power Bills to Go Up During December?

There are a few myths that should be dispelled regarding why power bills tend to noticeably go up during the month of December.

The number one myth is that Christmas tree lights cause the bill to increase significantly. If you have the older style of incandescent tree lights, they are typically about 45 watts for a 100-light string. Using the co-op's current 11.43 cents per kilowatt hour (kWh) rate, we come to a cost of a half a cent per hour for that 100-light string.

Unless you have a lot of high-wattage holiday lighting at your house, Christmas lights are likely not the cause of your higher power bill in December.

Assuming those lights are turned on for four hours per day from Dec. 1 to Dec. 31, that person will use 62 cents of electricity during that time span. If a person were to use three times the amount of Christmas tree lights, we would only be talking about \$1.86 worth of electricity.

So for the average home, the cost of decorations is fairly minimal. However, if you're determined to win the most-decorated-house-on-the-street award, then your home's usage will be in direct relation to its visibility from outer space.

For those who like to be as energy efficient as possible, LED (light-emitting diode) Christmas lights are now available.

According to Energy Star, testing has shown that 140 LED lights can be powered using the same amount of electricity needed to power just a single 7-watt incandescent bulb. That is roughly the equivalent of two LED light strings compared to a single incandescent bulb. This equates to pennies a month to light up a Christmas tree with LED lights.

The other myth is that power bills increase in December because families are cooking larger holiday meals. A typical oven set at 350 degrees, for one hour will use about 2 kilowatt hours of electricity. At the co-op's current rate, that amounts to a cost of just under 23 cents per hour. If a person is cooking for four hours straight, that still is less than a dollar of electricity.

Of course, every penny counts. So a good tip to reduce energy consumption when cooking is to use your microwave as much as possible because it has shorter run times. Also, plan meals with more dishes that don't require cooking such as salads and fruit bowls. If you have to use an oven, resist the temptation to open the oven door to look inside. Just opening the door for a moment can reduce the inside of the oven by 25 degrees. When cooking on your stove top, match the size of the pan to the heating element. More heat will get to the pan and less will be lost to the surrounding air. A 6-inch pan on an 8-inch burner will waste more than 40 percent of the electricity.

So if neither of these two before-mentioned myths causes December power bills to rise, then what does? The answer to that question is the arrival of colder weather. The autumn months through November are typically mild-weather

months. Homes aren't doing a lot of heating or cooling, so power usage is limited to base load consumption. Base load is the amount of electricity your house uses regardless of the outside temperature. This includes cooking, cleaning, entertainment, etc. Base load use for homes is usually considerably less than heating and cooling load. It's not until heating or cooling power consumption is added to that base load that members see higher power bills. So in the fall, members' power bills tend to be moderate through November. Then the temperatures start to drop in December, and heaters run more often and for longer. Accustomed to lower power bills, members are often surprised by the higher bill for December. Many then assume that increase was due to holiday lighting or cooking.

The easiest way to trim that December power bill is by turning your thermostat down. We recommend setting it to 65 degrees. Those with heat pumps are advised to set the thermostat at one temperature (hopefully 65 degrees) and leave it there. Raising and lowering the thermostat setting often on a heat pump causes the unit to become inefficient.

Also, make sure that doors to rooms are left open and vents are unblocked. A home is most efficient when conditioned air can freely circulate and reach the thermostat to turn it off.

The good news is that you can decorate in moderation and cook more without significantly increasing your power bill. But as for the thermostat, that needs to stay down, except when older relatives are visiting, of course.