



October 2020

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Albemarle Sounds

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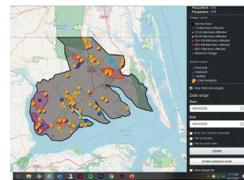
*Albemarle EMC is an equal opportunity
provider and employer.*

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 
The power of human connections®

Co-op Responds to Isaias

In the early morning hours of Tuesday, Aug. 4, Hurricane Isaias knocked out power to close to 4,000 Albemarle Electric Membership Corporation members.

As soon as winds subsided to a safe working level, Albemarle EMC linemen began



*The AEMC outage
map shows outages
during Isaias.*

restoring power. Damages included broken poles, trees that fell into lines, blown fuses caused by tree limbs touching power lines, and tree limbs blown into lines.



*A blown-over utility
pole in Holiday Island,
in Perquimans County.*

A section of the co-op's service territory in northern Chowan County was one of the last to be restored. The metering point that serves the northern section is fed by a Dominion Energy

line that sustained significant damage. Once Dominion crews restored power to their line, Albemarle EMC was able to restore power to the remaining members in Chowan County.

By 10:42 p.m. Aug. 4, power had been restored to all Albemarle EMC members. "Albemarle EMC employees did an exemplary job of coordinating an outage-restoration effort that spanned the majority of our service area," said Gary Ray, general manager of Albemarle EMC. "They worked safely and efficiently."

Director Becomes Credentialed



*AEMC board Director Aubrey Tynch recently
received a certificate of completion for the
Credentialed Cooperative Director Program.*

No Lost- Time Accident Record Celebrated

Albemarle EMC employees recently celebrated reaching 2,500 days without a lost-time accident. We have not had a lost-time accident since 2013!

"Working safely for this amount of time takes a team effort," said Gary Ray, general manager of Albemarle EMC.

This safety record is important for the health and welfare of our employees and their families. It also benefits the co-op's productivity.

Four ACT Grants Approved

The Albemarle Community Trust recently approved four grants that will offer significant benefits to our community.

Elizabeth City's Parks and Recreation Department was approved to receive \$3,000 for its Pop-Up P.E. Program. The physical education sessions will be held three days a week and serve more than 50 children, while social distancing, and be open to all Elizabeth City and Pasquotank County children. The funds will be used to purchase exercise and gaming equipment as well as art supplies and sanitation products.

"The Pop-Up P.E. Program will provide regular, physical activity to children who will be learning virtually for the foreseeable future," said Jon Hawley, grants administrator for Elizabeth City.

The Belvidere-Chappell Hill Volunteer Fire Department received \$2,000 that will be used to help pay off their recently purchased 2020 brush truck. The truck is equipped with a 1,250-gallon tank.

The Camden County 4-H Foundation received a \$600 grant to support its virtual learning program. The funds will be used to purchase supplies for take-home educational kits. The supplies will include oven mitts, utensil kits, aprons, measuring cups and cutting boards. Due to COVID-19, Camden County 4-H has shifted its education from in-person to virtual.

Historic Hertford, Inc. received \$3,000 to purchase LED lighting for their building. By using efficient LED lighting, the organization will reduce its power usage and be able to better serve the nonprofit organizations that use the building.

Toy Drive to Continue, Despite Canceled Tournament

Due to COVID-19, Albemarle EMC did not hold this year's annual charity golf tournament. However, the co-op is proceeding with the Light Up Christmas Toy Drive.

"Several of our corporate partners have indicated they will support our toy drive, so we will continue to provide toys to struggling families, to the best of our ability," said Gary Ray, general manager of Albemarle EMC.

Members who would like to help financially with this year's toy drive can mail a tax-deductible contribution to the Albemarle Community Trust, P.O. Box 69, Hertford, NC 27944. Contributions should be made by Friday, Nov. 6 to give the co-op time to deliver the toys to the schools.

Save Energy This Fall



When you are home and awake, set your thermostat as low as is comfortable. When you are asleep or out of the house, turn your thermostat back 10 to 15 degrees for eight hours and save around 10 percent a year on your heating bills. A smart or programmable thermostat can make it easy to set back your temperature. If you have a heat pump, maintain a moderate setting or use a programmable thermostat specially designed for use with heat pumps.

Innovating a Brighter Future

October is National Cooperative Month, an annual recognition of the ways electric co-ops like Albemarle EMC are building a brighter future for our members and communities. Co-op innovation is at the center of these efforts, as we are constantly seeking new solutions and technologies to expand services, find efficiencies and strengthen the electric grid.

Power no longer moves in a linear path from our cooperative to our members. Instead, cooperatives are coordinating a variety of energy resources distributed across the grid, including solar, microgrids, battery storage and even smart thermostats and water heater controls. By implementing and coordinating these resources, Albemarle EMC is advancing the way the grid is managed to provide you a higher level of service and value.

Consider taking advantage of one of these innovative grid programs:

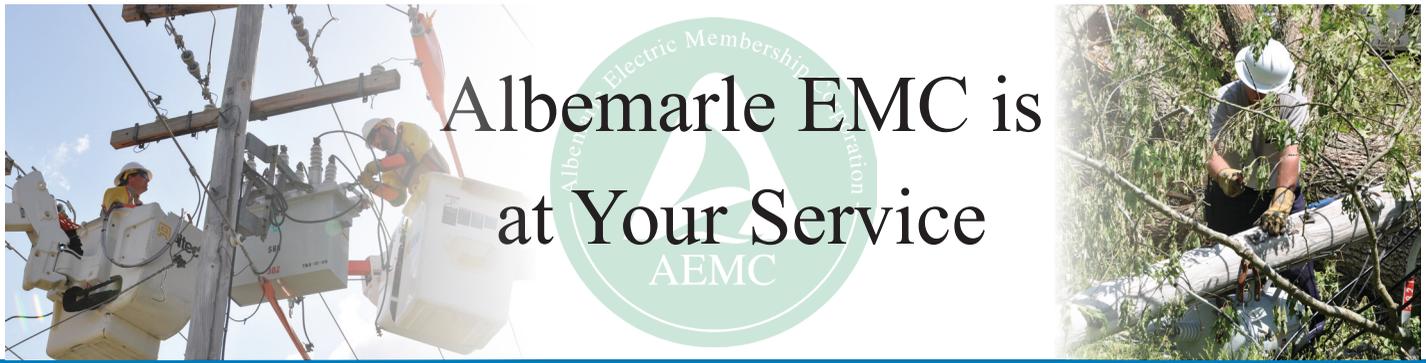
Prepay Billing – This billing method enables members to pay for electricity prior to using it instead of one time a month. Because electricity is paid for up front, members who participate will pay a lower security deposit. Those who participate will be able to pay for their electricity either directly at the co-op's office during normal business hours, or 24 hours a day by phone or online using a credit or debit card. Members will be able to make payments as often as they like and in the amounts they desire.

Power-Use Monitoring and Alerts – Through our online portal (located at www.aemc.coop), you can monitor your energy usage monthly, daily and hourly. You can also set up high-use alerts to automatically notify you by email or text when your usage exceeds a predetermined level.

Lineman Transfers to Engineering Depart.



Lineman Ken Winslow will transfer from the co-op's Operations Department to the Engineering Department. In his new role, he will primarily be responsible for staking and designing new residential services for members.



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

Lead Customer Service Representative Retires

by Chris Powell, coordinator of public relations

Editor's note: Lead Customer Service Representative Barbara Moore recently retired after serving 19 years at Albemarle EMC. During her tenure, she worked through outages caused by hurricanes Isabel, Irene, Matthew, Dorian and Isaias as well as outages from ice storms, countless thunderstorms and a few tornadoes.

As her title suggested, Barbara's job was to assist members through circumstances that could be both rewarding and challenging. Her inherent calm demeanor and poise equipped her with a quiet strength that could handle even the most tense situations. The following is an interview I was able to conduct with her before her retirement.

When did you start working at Albemarle EMC?

I began working with Albemarle EMC as a customer service representative (CSR) in March of 2001, after having worked as a caseworker for a county Department of Social Services for more than ten years. It was a welcomed change, but as the new kid on the block, I soon found out that I had a lot to learn. I am grateful for coworkers, some of whom have since left, who were willing to share their knowledge with me as well as a manager that gave me the space to learn. In 2011, I was promoted to lead CSR.

How has your work changed through the years?

Although I have seen many changes over the years, I really can't say that my work has changed. I've always considered providing whatever service I could to co-op members as my primary job duty. In customer service, that does not change. The co-op has always been member oriented, so in that way it has not changed. The changes I've seen have been more related to procedures and equipment changes and program upgrades to keep up with changing times and provide better service to the members. I've also been witness to staff and position changes, which, I understand, are sure to happen with time.

What has been your biggest challenge?

As far as the biggest challenge of my career, I would say that would be getting to work when the weather or road conditions were less than favorable. I've seen water across the roads, snow-

covered roads, trees across the road. The co-op has always made staying safe primary, but it was always understood that we were expected to do the best we could to make it in to work. I learned that when the lights go off, members appreciate hearing a live person actually pick up the phone when they call.

What is the most humorous experience you recall?

I will say that my funniest experiences were those shared with or by coworkers. For example, one coworker shared that after empathizing with a member who called to report that he had lost a leg, she came to realize that he was talking about losing one leg of his electric service.

What is the strangest experience you remember?

The strangest experience was looking out the front window of our old office building and seeing boats floating down Creek Drive and wondering how or when I would be able to get home. That was during Hurricane Isabel.

What are you most proud of?

The accomplishments I can say I am most proud of involved working with members who were less than happy about their bill or something to do with their electrical service and being able to calm down a situation and turn a negative into a positive, or almost positive. The second thing is being a team player and willing to help where I am needed.

What will you miss the most?

The thing that I will miss most is the thing we tend to complain most about – that is until we get to this point in life – and that is the routine. My challenge going forward is to establish a new routine, one that is a little slower paced and more flexible for the times. No, I have not planned to take a trip to Paris. However, I do plan to stay busy, visit family more, help more in my church and live each day to the fullest.

What advice would you give to a new employee?

My advice for any person just starting work with the cooperative would be don't be afraid to ask questions, learn from your mistakes (because no one is perfect) and expect change. Customer service representatives represent the attitudes and ideals of the co-op. Remain mindful that you are on the front line, and your job is important.

