

January's extreme cold meant high demand for electricity

In an average year, Brunswick Electric members use the most electricity in February, traditionally the coldest month of the year for our service territory. But this year the extremely cold temperatures in early January, including snow and ice when Winter Storm Grayson went through our area, were cold enough that we hit our peak demand for electricity early. That's not to say we won't hit it again in February though. So what does this mean for you, a BEMC member?

Peak demand for electricity occurs when everyone is using a lot of electricity at the same time – often we see this between 6 a.m. and 8 a.m. when many people start getting ready for work or school and use hot water, turn on the TV, etc., and again in the evening after people get home and start cooking dinner. When it's extremely cold outside people will often turn up the thermostat to stay warm. When every house in the area is using more energy this way it puts greater demand on our system as a whole. While BEMC has the resources to meet this peak demand so that you have power 99.92 percent of the time, you may find that you're using more kilowatt hours on a daily basis, which could result in a higher bill the next month.

If you're concerned about how much energy you're using this winter we encourage you to download the SmartHub app to keep tabs on your daily usage, and use the tips we've provided in this issue to make small changes that will help reduce your overall energy consumption.



Winter Storm Grayson left behind snow and ice in early January but thankfully very few outages were reported in Brunswick Electric's service territory as a result.

Low-cost ways to stay warmer & save

Thermostat – make small adjustments. With a heat pump, big moves to adjust the settings can backfire, causing the unit to work less efficiently. That can increase your costs. It's more efficient to make smaller adjustments in heat settings instead – such as lowering the temperature just 1° or 2° instead of 10°.

Water heater – lower the setting. Hot water is a big energy user. The U.S. Department of Energy recommends keeping your water heater's thermostat set at 120°. Anything higher is unnecessary. Every 10-degree reduction in your water heater's thermostat can shave 3% to 5% off your bill.

Attic door – insulate. Even if your attic is insulated, it's easy to overlook the attic door. Add a layer of insulation to the inside of the door to prevent heated air from rising into the attic.

Furnace filters – change monthly. Replace furnace filters regularly – even monthly, depending on the type you buy and how much the furnace is running. Read your appliance's manual to find the replacement schedule and type, as well as installation instructions.

Ceiling fans – push warm air down. Most ceiling fans have a switch so you can set the blades to push the warm air near the ceiling down toward the floor. This switch is likely on the body of the fan.



Manager's Message

Nothing is more important to us at BEMC than restoring your electricity as quickly and safely as possible when there is a power interruption.

Even though Brunswick Electric can report a reliability rating of 99.92 percent – that's the amount of time that your power is on – sometimes outages do happen. To minimize these power interruptions, our systems are well maintained, are constantly monitored, and we have redundancy capabilities in place.

When power does go out, our crews of line technicians and control center employees are always ready, 24 hours a day and every day of the year, to do their part in the restoration process. Using their experience, training and our state-of-the-art outage system, they are able to identify the location and nature of the problem quickly. But we could use your help to do the job even faster.

When you call in an outage, if the phone you use is the phone number we have on file as your primary phone number, it helps us identify your location. Our system links your phone number to your account and your meter, so it is very important for Brunswick Electric to have your current phone number on file. You might be thinking that since you've been a member of the co-op for years that your number is already on your account. But, is that number your current mobile number or your old landline? If there were to be an outage today, which phone would you use to call (800) 682-5309, BEMC's outage

reporting number? If you said mobile phone, I encourage you to update your account information so we can identify your reported outage quickly and get crews on their way to restore your power. See the following page for a quick and easy way to do so.

We know it's a great feeling of relief when the power is restored after an outage. That's why BEMC does everything we can to prevent outages in the first place. Thanks in advance for helping us restore your power faster and more efficiently – please update your contact information with us today.



Don Hughes

Don Hughes,
CEO/General Manager



Crews replacing equipment to prevent a potential outage in Brunswick County.

Is now a good time for a Weatherization Loan?

Older heat pumps tend to quit working when you need them most – on the coldest winter days. And if you're like most people, you probably wait until they break to replace them because of the expense.



For almost 30 years Brunswick Electric has been providing low-interest loans of up to \$6,000 to qualified member households, and up to \$10,000 to qualified member businesses, for energy efficiency improvements such as replacing heat pumps, windows and doors. **We loaned more than \$1 million just in 2017!** Payments are generally spread over five years and are billed with your monthly power bill.

The process is simple:

1. Choose your project. Visit bemc.org for a list of qualifying projects.
2. Contact us after you've obtained cost estimates and know how much you want to borrow.
3. Complete a loan application. You'll get an answer if you qualify very quickly, generally within 24 hours.
4. Arrange for the work to be done.
5. When the work is complete come to our office, sign the promissory note and we will pay your contractor.



Stop by any BEMC office, call us at (800) 842-5871 Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., or visit bemc.org for more information.



Update your contact information and enter to win \$100

Please take a minute to update your account using the form on our website at bemc.org/contest. As a thank you for taking time to update our records, you will be entered into a drawing for a chance to win a \$100 Visa gift card. **We'll randomly select a winner on February 28**, so complete the form today! Questions? Please call (800) 842-5871, Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Watts-for-Sale

Buck Stove vent free gas fireplace, light color wood mantel, 50"x45"x19", \$200; 570-620-9147

A-iPower Generator, 12,000 Watt, in original box, paid \$1,200 will consider \$800; 843-352-6950

2006 Harley Davidson Street Glide, completely outfitted, 970 miles, black cherry, \$13,500; 828-231-8606

Entertainment center, 23"x27"x79", with 2 shelves together, 25"x47"x83", \$300; free-standing swing, 47"x74"x73", \$60; both exc. cond.; 619-2535

Tomberlin Crossfire 150R golf cart, 2-seater, electric start, automatic transmission, disk brakes, 4 coilover suspension, \$500; 625-7987

Electric baseboard heat, good as new, 8' section \$125; 6' section \$40; 309-7022

1986 Chevrolet S10, runs, fair to good cond.; \$1,500 OBO, 642-4804

Forest River Vibe 18' camper, dry bathroom, exc. cond., \$8,000; 620-9798

Recliner, brown leather, 2 years old, \$325; cherry dining set, hutch, table, leaf, 6 upholstered chairs, exc. cond., \$450; 859-8302

Antique 1200 egg Leahy Favorite Incubator, commercial, redwood, \$1,065; double dog kennel, \$200 OBO; 843-568-8333

Brent Slab Roller for pottery making, 26"x76"x34", \$800; 842-5980

Martin Dreadnought Junior Acoustic Guitar, electric, gig bag, almost new, \$350; 383-1374

Golf club bending machine, stand and tools \$50; 253-9621

Harmony Hummingbird Sunburst guitar, carrying case, beginner books, exc. cond., \$100; 371-2017

1948 John Deere M, restored, \$5,000; 770-3526

Did you know?

Your local co-op is growing. In 2017, BEMC installed 2,618 new meters across our service territory.



Don't miss these application deadlines:



Community Grants
February 15, 2018



Scholarship Hwy
March 15, 2018

HOW TO SUBMIT AN AD: Ads must be received via email or fax no later than the first of each month. Ads will then appear in the following month's publication due to the printing schedule. Example: If ad is received by March 1, it will appear in the April issue of Carolina Country magazine. This is a free service for BEMC members to advertise non-commercial items for sale. Ads run ONE TIME, are limited to three lines, and only one phone number. We reserve the right to edit or refuse ads due to content, length or AVAILABLE SPACE. Please no email addresses, names or repeat ads. All numbers are 910 area code unless otherwise listed. Some mobile providers require 10-digit dialing. BEMC does not endorse items advertised and is not responsible for reliability of items.

E-MAIL: watts4sale@bemc.org **MAIL:** BEMC, Attn: Watts For Sale, PO Box 826, Shallotte, NC 28459. **FAX:** (910) 755-4299



CUSTOMER SERVICE (800)842-5871 | OUTAGE REPORTING (800)682-5309

Shallotte (910)754-4391 | Southport / Oak Island (910)457-9808 | Whiteville (910)642-5011

P.O. Box 826, Shallotte, NC 28459

www.bemc.org | email: newsletter@bemc.org | Auto bill payment 24/7 (866)934-6830



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

John Ward
President

Frederick Tedder
Vice President

Hubert Brittain
Phillip Cheers

John Kopp
Jack Miller

Don Hughes
CEO/General Manager

David Gore
Secretary Treasurer

Moses Herring
Asst. Secretary Treasurer

Calvin Duncan
Monroe Enzor, Jr.
Larry Fowler

JoAnn Simmons
Bryan Smith

Dennis Worley
Attorney