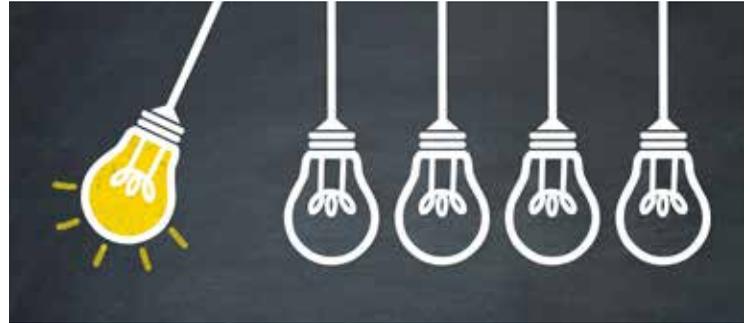




Here's How to Participate in Your 2021 Virtual Annual Meeting



Due to continued COVID-19 safety precautions, there will be no in-person Brunswick EMC membership meeting this year. The business portion of the 2021 meeting will be held in a virtual format and will be broadcast at 10:30 a.m. on September 25. Members will have the opportunity to register and vote for the Board of Directors at all three office locations on September 23 and September 24.

Gifts will be available to the first 2,000 members who register and vote, and all those who register and vote will be eligible for prize drawings. The drawings will be held during the virtual meeting, and prizes will be mailed to

the winners. Information about how to attend the virtual business meeting, and how to submit questions to be answered during the meeting, will be posted on social media and at bemc.org.

We hope to hold an in-person meeting next year, with all the accompanying festivities. For now, the important things to remember for this year are:

- There will be no in-person Annual Meeting
- You can attend the virtual business portion of the Annual Membership Meeting Saturday, September 25, 2021, at 10:30 a.m.
- Information on how to attend the meeting, and how to submit questions ahead of time, will be posted on social media and at bemc.org.
- Register and vote for your Board of Directors at any office location on September 23 from 9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. and September 24 from 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
- Gifts will be available for the first 2,000 members who register and vote
- Those who register and vote will be eligible for prize drawings

Operate Your Thermostat for Maximum Savings

- **Setting your thermostat to a very low temperature in an attempt to cool your home faster doesn't work**, because your HVAC system only cools at one speed. Setting it lower than needed can affect your system's efficiency and performance.
- **When you select your indoor temperature**, take into consideration that the smaller the difference between the indoor and outdoor temperatures, the lower your cooling bill will be.



Tips & Tools

- **Use a programmable thermostat** to keep your house warmer than normal when you are away or asleep, and return it to a comfortable temperature when you return or wake up. Save energy without sacrificing comfort.

Communications Team at Your Service

As your co-op's Communications Team, it's our role to get the word out about Brunswick Electric's programs, services and events. It's a serious responsibility and an honor.

Beyond providing reliable electricity at the lowest possible cost, it's BEMC's job to develop and offer programs and services that give you control over your energy usage, and help you lower your bill. Options like PrePay Power, Time-of-Use rates and demand response programs offer you ways to control consumption. This makes member education such an important effort for the Communications Team.

Serving the membership through community involvement is a part of our culture. We're proud to support chamber of commerce events, career days, agricultural festivals, and many other community celebrations. We're excited that we don't just provide financial support, but are involved in the events that we believe in and our members believe in.

BEMC's community involvement also includes offering programs to support our members, like Bright Ideas Education Grants, college scholarships, Community Grants and Warm Homes, Warm Hearts utility assistance. We're proud of the spirit of camaraderie

includes outage texting and web-based solutions. And we're growing our partnerships with

local media in order to broaden our reach regarding all aspects of your membership.

You'll also see an increased focus on internal communications. This is your cooperative, and we are committed to transparency. We believe the more transparent we are, the more confidence you will have in your membership. Additionally, we'll be making a greater effort to share news across all our departments. It's important to us that



Brookes Versaggi
Manager, Member Engagement and Communications

our employees are fully knowledgeable about what we do, because they share information with and answer questions from family, friends and neighbors.

We aim for these communications initiatives to connect



We want to make sure information about these programs is accessible and understandable across several platforms, so you can take advantage of the ones that fit your lifestyle. Finding new and better ways to inform you is a top priority for us.

and cooperation that our community exhibits and excited to share these opportunities with our membership.

Moving forward, you can expect us to communicate in ways increasingly convenient to you, so that it's easier than ever to stay connected with us. This

us more directly with our communities. We want to build bridges between BEMC, our members, the media, stakeholders, and more. And we hope to make some friends along the way, too. It makes our job extremely gratifying and we hope it serves you well.

Member
atters

This section of the newsletter is written by a BEMC employee or member of the executive team about a timely topic that affects you as a member of BEMC.

What You Need to Know About Today's Electric Vehicles

Technology is rapidly advancing in the electric vehicle industry. Even just a year or two ago the lists of pros and cons regarding purchasing an EV would be about equal in length. That's not the case anymore; here are the current state of considerations.



➤ **EVs are priced competitively, and there are options for every lifestyle.**

Many models on the market have an MSRP between \$30,000 and \$40,000, and buying one may qualify you for a \$7,500 federal tax credit. The average cost to install a charging station in your garage is about \$700. And you'll find a wide selection available, including SUVs, sedans, hatchbacks, trucks and luxury models.

➤ **They are cheaper and easier to maintain, and cost less to run.**

There are no oil changes or other maintenance and repairs associated with a traditional gas engine, and brakes last longer. The cost to fuel an EV is about half what it costs to fuel a gas-powered car, which means savings every month. And most EV batteries are warranted for 8 years or 100,000 miles.

➤ **They are safer and more fun to drive.**

The battery and electric motors are underneath the cabin, creating a larger crumple zone and making EVs safer. They have more torque, a silent motor, and a lower center of gravity for better handling. And they have front and rear trunks for more storage room.

➤ **They can get you where you want to go.**

Even if you have a long commute, current models have ranges

from 250 to 400 miles, so you'll have plenty of fuel left for after work activities. And there is a network of public charging stations stretching across the country, making vacations possible.

➤ **Charging them is simple.**

Once you install a charging station in your garage, it is as simple as charging your phone. Just plug your EV in at night and it will be ready to go in the morning. And public charging stations can refuel you on long trips in as little as 30 minutes.

➤ **They are better for the environment.**

Because they don't have an exhaust system, they have no emissions, which helps us lower greenhouse gasses. And the air around them is easier to breath.

➤ **What is an EV test drive like and what questions should I ask at the dealership?**

Test driving an EV is like test driving a gas-powered car; it will be fueled up and ready to go when you get there. Ask anything you're curious about including scheduled maintenance, range, home charging station needs, and all available tax incentives.

Looking for an Effective Way to Help Your Neighbors?

If you're searching for a way to make your charitable gifts go further, consider making a donation to the Warm Homes, Warm Hearts year-round utility assistance program. BEMC will match your donation, doubling the impact of your generosity.

The funds are administered by Brunswick Family Assistance and the Columbus County Department of Aging, who distribute them to those in need across our service area.

Donations can be made by mail to Warm Homes, Warm Hearts, PO Box 826, Shallotte, NC 28459. Please do not enclose the donation with your electric bill payment.



Most Heat is Lost Through Windows – True or False?

While heat can be lost through windows, window heat loss is only a small percentage of the total heat loss in a home. Typically, walls account for much more heat loss because of their large surface area. It's best to consider insulating walls before upgrading windows since heat loss through windows is usually minimal.

Bright Ideas Education Grants Early Bird Deadline is August 15

It's time to remind teachers that you know that they can apply for a grant up to \$2,000 for an innovative classroom project that needs funding. The deadline to apply is September 15, and applications received by August 15 will be entered into a drawing for a \$100 Visa gift card. We've made the application process simple, and everything they'll need to know to apply is available at bemc.org/bright-ideas-grants.



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