



May 2020

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**We are members of NC  
811. Call 811 or 1-800-  
632-4949 three business  
days before you plan to  
dig.**

Albemarle Electric Membership Corporation is now accepting applications for the 2020 Bright Ideas Education Grant program. Educators can apply for grants of up to \$1,000 to fund creative, hands-on projects in K-12 classrooms. Teachers can apply individually or as a team, and grants are available for projects in all subject areas.

Since the program began 26 years ago, North Carolina's electric cooperatives



have collectively awarded more than \$12.9 million in grants to K-12 teachers for 12,300 projects benefitting 2.5 million students across the state. In 2019, over \$700,000 was awarded for more than 660 projects across the state, the most funding ever given in a single grant cycle.

Applications are accepted through Sept. 15, 2020. To learn more and apply for a Bright Ideas grant, visit [ncbrightideas.com](http://ncbrightideas.com).

## Albemarle Sounds

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

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative  
*The power of human connections®*

## Old Albemarle Sounds Donated



While going through some of her late mother's belongings, Gladys Jennings, stumbled across a find she wanted to share.

Tucked away inside of her mother's bible was a June, 1987 copy of the *Albemarle Sounds*. At that time, the *Albemarle Sounds* was a stand alone publication that the co-op mailed to its members, monthly. Jennings' mother, Eula Umphlett, lived on White Hat Road, in Perquimans County. Jennings donated the publication back to AEMC. The publication will be stored in the co-op's archives.

It is important that we have your current contact information. To update your contact info, please call (252) 426-5735 or visit our online member portal at [www.aemc.coop](http://www.aemc.coop).



# AEMC Responds to Coronavirus

Immediately following the outbreak of the Coronavirus, Albemarle EMC took several steps to lessen the chances of spreading COVID-19 and to help protect our members and employees.

The co-op's lobby was closed on March 23 for an indefinite period. However, to continue to serve the membership, the drive-through window and phones remained open to assist members with payments, new service connects, disconnects and other needs.

Members were also encouraged to use remote options for bill payments that include our member portal and AEMC mobile app which can be found on the co-op's website. Members were also encouraged to make payments by phone, which is available 24 hours a day by calling (252) 426-4419.

The impact of COVID-19 caused financial hardship for many of our members. During this crisis, all non-pay disconnects for regular and prepay accounts were suspended for at least 60

days. All late payment fees and penalties were also suspended. To further help our members, the Albemarle EMC Board of Directors approved a record-breaking \$606,525 capital credit refund. Active members that had electricity with the co-op in 1994, 1995 and 2018 will receive credits on their bills in April. Checks will be mailed to inactive members that had service during those years.

"We appreciate our members working with us during these trying times," said Gary Ray, general manager of Albemarle EMC. "Our cooperative has a long history of meeting challenges to provide its members with the reliable power they count on. The challenges we face today are like none other. Many of our neighbors, businesses and communities have been hit hard and are struggling. We stand committed to serving you and your families. We will do everything that we can and together we will get through this crisis."

# ACT Grants Aid Region



*The Open Door Food Pantry recently received a \$3,000 ACT grant to purchase food for families in need. From left are: Kathy Prewitt, Barbara Hurst and Sue Engelhardt.*



*Tyrone Dillard, a Camden County cooperative extension agent, was recently presented an \$870 grant from the Albemarle Community Trust. The funds will be used to purchase educational materials for their 4-H youth program.*

## Two Selected for Youth Tour



*Claribel Ordaz-Rios is congratulated by Principal Wayne Price.*

Jalen Sutton and Claribel Ordaz-Rios were both recently selected to attend the 2020 Washington Youth Tour. Unfortunately, the trip had to be canceled due to safety concerns regarding the Coronavirus.

"We are very disappointed that these two students will not be able to attend the Washington Youth Tour," said Gary Ray, general manager of Albemarle EMC. "We are exploring other options to give Jalen and Claribel the recognition they deserve."

Claribel, a 12th grader at Perquimans



*Jalen Sutton is congratulated by Principal Juvanda Crutch.*

County High School, is an honor roll student. She received the Junior Class President's Award of Chief Marshall. She received the College of the Albemarle Virginian Pilot Scholastic Achievement Award. She is a member of the National Society of High School Scholars.

Jalen is a 12th grader at Pasquotank County High School. He earned an internship with the International House of Pancakes, in Elizabeth City. His career aspirations are to become a police officer. His hobbies include watching basketball and spending time with his grandfather.



*Jenna Lassiter-Caldwell, community engagement and development coordinator for the Albemarle Alliance for Children and Families, received an ACT grant for \$1,000. The funds will be used to purchase 30 car seats for children.*



# Albemarle EMC is at Your Service



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

## May is Electricity Safety Month

by Chris Powell, coordinator of public relations

I'm not too proud to admit that I have been shocked by electricity a few times throughout my life. I still vividly remember the first time. I was a youngster tagging along with my grandfather while he was feeding his hogs. It was summer, and I was wearing shorts and rubber boots. Not paying attention, I backed into the hot wire that ran about a foot off the ground around the perimeter of the hog lot. Despite the rubber boots I was wearing, it still zapped me good. I remember my grandfather smiling as he said, "Bite you, didn't it." Obviously that was a minor electrical contact. Because if it wasn't, you wouldn't be reading this or at least not written by me.

May is national Electricity Safety Month, and Albemarle EMC wants to remind you and your loved ones to be safe with all things electrically powered.

Whether you are using a toaster oven or using a hair dryer in the bathroom, safety should be the first thing you think about. We all know that electricity travels through water, but it's still good to remind yourself that whenever you are around both of those elements, you are likely in a dangerous situation. If a device plugs into a wall, it really should not be in the bathroom with anyone who is taking a shower, bath or has a sink full of water. Also, unplug all kitchen appliances when not in use and store them in a safe and level place to prevent them from being accidentally knocked into a full sink. If you're home is older, you should have all of the receptacles in your kitchen and bathrooms replaced with ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCI) outlets. These outlets sense when a person is being electrocuted and turn themselves off.

When unplugging anything from an outlet, be sure to pull by the plug instead of the cord. Repeatedly pulling a cord will cause it to stress and eventually break, creating a shock hazard. When replacing light bulbs, check what wattage is needed on the label inside the light fixture or lamp. Additionally, be sure that lamps are sitting away from curtains or other materials that could easily catch fire and that they are placed on stable surfaces.

If you come across a downed power line, leave the area immediately and call 911. Be sure to warn others to stay away from the area as well. Before digging in your yard, call NC 811. Workers will be sent to your home to mark utility lines in your

yard. This service is free and has the potential to save your life.

We're getting close to the time of year when weekend projects requiring power tools become popular. These tools, which often include drills, saws and sanders, can be hazardous if handled improperly.

The chief hazards of electric-powered tools are burns and shock that can lead to injuries and even heart failure. A shock could also cause a power tool user to fall from an elevated surface, like a ladder or roof. Consider the following best practices when tackling your home improvement jobs using power tools.

- **To prevent shock, tools must have a double-insulated cord and a three-pronged plug.**
- **Always operate power tools within their design limitations and use them in the way intended.**
- **Know the right tools for the job and keep the tools in proper operating condition.**
- **Read the safety manual to understand safety precautions and potential hazards.**
- **If you do plan to use power tools while on a ladder, be sure not to use the top step/rung of that ladder.**
- **Wear the right personal protective equipment, including gloves, safety glasses and safety footwear to prevent injury.**
- **Long hair should be tied back and avoid wearing loose clothing.**
- **When not in use, tools should be stored in a dry, safe place away from children.**
- **Electric tools should not be used in damp or wet locations, including in the rain or near puddles.**