




May 2023

Proudly serving the members of Albemarle Electric Membership Corporation

Albemarle Sounds

is published monthly by
**Albemarle Electric Membership
Corporation**

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 
The power of human connections®

P.O. Box 69
Hertford, NC 27944
(252) 426-5735

Gary Ray, General Manager
Chris Powell, Editor

Website and member portal:
www.aemc.coop

Outages:
1-800-274-2072
24-hour payments:
(252) 426-4419

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



Albemarle EMC will
be closed Monday,
May 29 in observance
of Memorial Day.

Capital Credit Refund Approved

The Albemarle Electric Membership Corporation Board of Directors recently approved the retirement of capital credits.

Capital credits are the year-end margins earned by your cooperative. They are allocated to each member based on their electric usage for that year. These monies are a source of equity and may be returned to members when the co-op is in a sound financial position. The cooperative has been fortunate enough to make annual refunds to our members for as far back as co-op records go. The oldest non-retired margins on our books are for 1997.

In an effort to reach the members that have been with us the longest as well as benefit those that are among the newest, the refund years will consist of those shown in the yellow box.

Retired Capital Credits		
1997 remaining margins	100%	\$522,729.41
2021 remaining margins	3%	<u>\$78,764.58</u>
Total Approximate Refund		\$601,493.99

If you were a member of Albemarle EMC during these years, and are an active member, you received a capital credits refund in April in the form of a credit on your electric bill. The credit was a line item on your bill stating “Capital Credit Refund.” If a member has several accounts, the capital credit system adds them together. The credit will only be posted on one account. Anyone that received power during these years but is no longer an active member was mailed a check. This is why it is so important for you to give us a good forwarding address when you move off our lines.

CERT Team Receives Grant



The Deep Creek Shores Community Emergency Response Team was recently awarded a \$1,919 grant from the Albemarle Community Trust. The grant will be used to upgrade their emergency communication system.

AEMC Offers Grants for Teachers with 'Bright Ideas'



Teachers now can apply for Bright Ideas education grants from Albemarle EMC. The local electric cooperative is providing grants of up to \$1,000 to bring creative learning projects to life and enhance educational experiences for local students. Teachers can apply online at www.ncbrightideas.com. The final deadline to apply is Sept. 15. Teachers who apply before the Aug. 15 early bird deadline will be entered into a special drawing.

"Bright Ideas grants are a wonderful way for teachers to fund projects that enhance learning opportunities in the classroom," said Albemarle EMC General Manager Gary Ray. "We encourage every educator in approved schools to apply."

Albemarle EMC expects to award more than \$16,000 in Bright Ideas grants to local teachers in the 2023-2024 school year. Funding is available for K-12 classroom projects in all curriculum areas including art, history, math, reading, science and technology. Educators can apply as individuals or as a team and must include a budget, project goals, implementation plan and description of how the project will engage students and enhance their success.

The Bright Ideas education grant program is a shared initiative among all 26 electric co-ops in North Carolina. Collectively, Albemarle EMC and North Carolina's electric cooperatives have issued more than \$15 million supporting 14,200 projects benefitting well over 3.5 million students statewide.

Members Encouraged To Join Voices for Cooperative Power



Albemarle EMC is encouraging its members to join electric cooperatives' new political advocacy group, Voices for Cooperative Power.

Voices for Cooperative Power is a network of electric co-op members working together to influence elected officials who are making energy policy decisions that impact electric co-ops and, by extension, our way of life. Please take the time to visit the website voicesforcooperativepower.com and join this advocacy group. You will be asked to enter your name, zip code, email, then click register. That's it! Once you have registered, you will receive notices when legislation that affects your cooperative is being deliberated. You will then be given the option to send a prewritten letter to your legislators that advocates for Albemarle EMC.

Beware Misleading Salespeople

A member recently made Albemarle EMC personnel aware of a particular solar company making untruthful claims about the co-op.

The member said that a door-to-door salesperson told him that Albemarle EMC is being sued by the government for not using clean energy and that our rates would be going up 20 percent. There is no truth to the salesperson's claim. If you encounter a salesperson making questionable claims about the co-op, please call our office at 252-426-5735 to verify the information.



Certification Earned



Lineman Apprentice Drake Trueblood (left) recently earned his Overhead Line Construction III Certification by completing 32 hours of instruction at Nash Community College. He is congratulated by Operations Manager Roy O'Neal.

AEMC Assists Perquimans County



Albemarle EMC recently assisted the Perquimans County Recreation Department by installing a new scoreboard at one of the softball fields located on Granby St., in Hertford. From left are Lineman First Class Austin Cooke and Lineman Apprentice Cody Stokely.

May is Electricity Safety Month

Albemarle EMC offers electricity safety demonstrations for children as well as adults. If your organization would like to schedule a demonstration, please call Public Relations Coordinator Chris Powell at (252) 426-5735.



Albemarle EMC is at Your Service

AEMC Advocates for Members

by Chris Powell, coordinator of public relations

Representatives from Albemarle EMC and other electric cooperatives from across the state recently met with state legislators to discuss several issues of importance.

At the top of the list was protection of critical electrical grid infrastructure. There have been three recent attacks on electrical infrastructure that affected cooperative members in North Carolina. In Randolph County, an Energy United substation was intentionally damaged. Fortunately, the cooperative was able to avoid service interruption to its members. The damage to the substation came just weeks after two Duke Energy substations were damaged in Moore County. That attack cut power to 40,000 people as well as two of Randolph EMC's substations. Randolph EMC was able to build a new power line to shorten the outage time for some of its members.

The North Carolina Legislature is currently pushing to increase fines and penalties to deter attacks, trespass and vandalism at substations and other critical infrastructure. The electric cooperatives voiced their wholehearted support for increasing these measures. At the same time, co-op representatives stressed the importance of staying flexible when it comes to providing security to critical infrastructure.

Securing and protecting the grid is a top priority for North Carolina's electric cooperatives. We incorporate multiple layers of security across our systems to monitor and protect critical infrastructure from natural and man-made threats. Staying ahead of these challenges is a collaborative effort, and North Carolina's electric cooperatives actively work alongside industry partners, peer organizations, government agencies and local officials to share information and

strengthen our systems. We continuously monitor, evaluate and prepare for threats to the grid and other critical infrastructure. This includes incorporating recommendations from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and the North American Electric Reliability Corporation.

Stronger criminal and civil penalties associated with substation security is



Representatives from several eastern North Carolina electric cooperatives discuss legislative topics with Sen. Norman Sanderson.

the appropriate focus for improving infrastructure security. However, legislators were advised against security requirements that may unnecessarily raise costs.

Electric Cooperative Innovation

Legislators were also asked to be mindful that any future energy policy should support cooperatives' ongoing efforts to innovate on behalf of our member-consumers and maintain the reliability, affordability and sustainability of the electric grid.

By working with legislators to shape energy policy, electric cooperatives have been able to implement innovative business strategies that benefit members. Albemarle EMC now has a special

rate that is designed to incentivize the charging of electric vehicles during times of lower demand on the grid. Through the Beat The Peak program, members are notified of periods of extreme temperatures so power usage can be lowered, reducing the co-op's wholesale power costs. For several years now, AEMC has offered FlexPay. This program enables members to pay for electricity prior to using it. Because electricity is paid up front, members who participate pay a lower security deposit. FlexPay is an excellent way for members to manage their monthly finances, while at the same time being able to closely monitor their home's power usage and make timely corrections when usage is abnormally high.

Protect the Reliability of North Carolina's Energy Portfolio

In 2021, the N.C. General Assembly passed the Energy Solutions for North Carolina Act. The act set a reliable, affordable and sustainable path forward for our state's energy sector. This legislation will transform the energy industry in the state. Legislators were asked to give the legislation time to be implemented and not authorize a study of a possible Regional Transmission Organization. An RTO is an electric power transmission organization that controls an electric grid that spans multiple states, therefore it is regulated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. Electric cooperatives strongly believe that the Energy Solutions for North Carolina Act is the better route forward for maintaining affordable, reliable power for our members. It provides flexibility while keeping control of our power infrastructure in North Carolina.