

# CURRENT REPORT

Published for Members of Lynches River Electric Cooperative

## Winter Brings Arctic Blast

The official first day of winter in 2010 was December 21; however, winter weather hit our region much earlier bringing frigid



temperatures and the beginning of the heating season. The result was a record peak demand on Dec. 14 for consumers served by South

Carolina's member-owned electric cooperatives and the state-owned utility Santee Cooper.

It should come as no surprise winter has arrived. It comes every year about the same time, as does the long hot summer in June. We even prepare for winter and summer by changing out our wardrobes, adding or removing bed linens and planting seasonal flowers.

But somehow we forget to prepare for how cold or hot these two seasons are or how they will affect our household budgets when we flip the heating or cooling switch on our thermostats.

Twice a year in the Current Report newsletter, South Carolina Living magazine and Lynches River Electric Cooperative's web site you will see articles explaining the reasons for the higher bills; specifically, how the weather affects your electric bill during the heating and cooling months of the year.

Heating and cooling your home on average accounts for about 50 percent of your utility bill, and is tied directly to outside temperatures.

Extreme outdoor temperatures require your heating or cooling system to work harder to maintain comfort indoors. The increased usage will show up on your bill.

An easy way to see just how much your heating/cooling cost increases your bill is to take a look at the kilowatt-hour (kwh) usage on bills you receive in spring or fall, when temperatures are moderate and heating/cooling

systems run rarely, if at all. Compare those bills with the kwh usage from bills for the summer and winter months. There will be a noticeable increase in usage during months when outdoor temperatures go way down or way up.

Read Date	Meter Read ↑↓	Read Type	KWH 📊 ↑↓
12/03/10	43959	Utility Read	856
11/03/10	43103	Utility Read	617
10/03/10	42486	Utility Read	965
09/02/10	41521	Utility Read	1,248
08/02/10	40273	Utility Read	1,341
07/02/10	38932	Utility Read	1,233
06/02/10	37699	Utility Read	819
05/02/10	36880	Utility Read	734
04/01/10	36146	Utility Read	945
03/02/10	35201	Utility Read	1,518
02/02/10	33683	Utility Read	1,770
01/03/10	31913	Utility Read	1,632
12/04/09	30281	Utility Read	828

The chart above is an actual location history from our consumer accounting system. As you can see in the kwh column, the usage increases in summer and winter when the heating and cooling system is in use.

Other factors affecting your bill are the efficiency of your heating/cooling system, the level of insulation in your home, the number of household members and

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# EPA Making Bad Call

As a sports fan, I know umpires are needed to enforce the rules of a game, but I've seen quite a few blown calls in my time.

In many ways, umpire mistakes mirror what's going on with government regulation regarding electric utilities and electricity production. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) writes the rulebook for power suppliers like our state-owned utility Santee Cooper, and EPA also serves as an umpire, enforcing the rules of the game.

At Lynch River Electric Cooperative, we're committed to keeping your electric bill affordable. So you can understand why I get upset when I see EPA folks make bad calls that put pressure on how much you pay for power.

Over the past two years, Congress debated, but never passed, a comprehensive climate change bill. Into this void, EPA has stepped forward and has now fielded a team of new regulations. Out of these "players," three could hit electric bills out of the park.

- **Clean Air Transport Rule:** This rule kicks in next year and aims to cap power plant emissions of sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides from state to state between 31 eastern states and the District of Columbia. By 2014, EPA claims the rule, when combined with other state and federal measures, will reduce sulfur dioxide emissions from power plants by 71 percent and nitrogen oxides emissions by 52 percent from 2005 levels, but it will cost utilities \$2.8 billion every year to comply.

- **Cooling Water Intake Requirements:** Power plants use water from lakes or rivers to cool generating equipment. While screens and various components prevent fish and other wildlife from entering water intake pipes, EPA thinks this equipment could be improved. We're expecting a rule proposal this month and the impact could be severe. The North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC), the nation's bulk power grid watchdog, claims if this rule is strictly enforced, one-third of U.S. electricity capacity may need to be retired.

- **Coal Ash:** To ensure the safe disposal of fly ash and other residues produced by coal-fired power plants EPA is considering whether or not to designate the materials—for the first time—as hazardous waste. Complying with this rule could cost billions and would also halt recycling efforts. Right now we use one-third of all fly ash as a Portland cement substitute—and for every ton of concrete replaced by fly ash, a ton of greenhouse gas emissions is avoided. On four prior occasions—most recently under the Clinton Administration in 2000—EPA determined CCRs do *not* warrant regulation as a hazardous waste. Not only did EPA find CCRs rarely, if ever, exhibit a hazardous waste characteristic, the agency also concluded states can safely manage CCRs under federal non-hazardous waste rules.

Lynch River Electric Cooperative is committed to keeping you informed about government regulations that will increase the cost of electricity. We're joining co-ops nationally to ask Congress for a much-needed time-out—a two-year moratorium on EPA regulation of carbon dioxide greenhouse gases. A delay would give lawmakers the opportunity to fashion climate change legislation that protects you, our consumers, and keeps electric bills affordable.



## Viewpoint

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David Altman

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### VISIT US ONLINE

[lynchesriver.com](http://lynchesriver.com)

### REMOTE PAYMENT SITES

*Chesterfield*

Piggly Wiggly Market of Chesterfield

1303 West Boulevard

843-623-6590

*Kershaw*

Quality Appliance

407 South Hampton Street

803-475-2302

*Lancaster*

The Energy Center, Inc.

667 Lancaster Bypass 9 E

803-283-6148

### OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Lynch River Electric Cooperative is a member owned electric cooperative committed to delivering reliable electric energy and related services at a competitive price, which will improve the quality of life of its members and communities.

### CURRENT REPORT EDITOR

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*David Q. Altman*



# Wondering what to do with used oil?

Santee Cooper, the state-owned utility that generates the power distributed to members of Lynch River Electric Cooperative sponsors the GOFER (Give Oil for Energy Recovery) program to safely collect and reuse used motor oil and other oils.

The used motor oil collected by Santee Cooper is used as a fuel to generate electricity at the Jefferies Generating Station in Berkeley County.

Santee Cooper oil collection tanks are located in most counties. Accepted products include motor oil, gear oil, fuel oil, heating oil, diesel fuel, kerosene, automatic transmission fluid, hydraulic fluid, household cooking oil in small quantities, and gas and oil mixtures. The oil is picked up by Santee Cooper's GOFER collection trucks.

For more information about used oil recycling contact Lynch River Electric Cooperative at 672-6111 or 1-800-922-3486. Or visit the following websites: [scgofer.org](http://scgofer.org) or [scdhec.gov](http://scdhec.gov).

*The energy contained in two gallons of used oil can power an average SC home for a day.*

*Source: Santee Cooper*

**GOFER** sites in Lynch River Electric Cooperative's service area include:

## **Chesterfield County**

- Watford Street at Town Maintenance Shed, Pageland
- Landfill Road, off Hwy. 265 (also accepts oil/gas mixtures), Jefferson
- Tech Road, off Hwy. 9, Cheraw
- SC 207 at Arant Street North, Pageland
- Goodale Road across from Detention Center, Chesterfield
- Burns Landfill on CR 115

## **Kershaw County**

- Mt. Pisgah & Jones Rd. off Lockhart Rd. & US 521/US 601 North, Camden
- 3007 John Richard Rd. SC 97, Camden
- CR 130 by race track off SC 91, Camden

- US 1 near airport, North of Camden
- 512 S. Fair St., Camden
- West of SC 341 behind police station, Bethune

**DHEC** (South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control) drop-off sites include:

## **Chesterfield County**

- 13678 Hwy. 102, Patrick

## **Lancaster County**

- 273 Shiloh Unity Rd., Lancaster
- 3122 Bethel Rd., Lancaster
- 5330 J. B. Denton Rd., Lancaster
- 2511 Shiloh Unity Rd., Lancaster
- 2149 Old Camden-Monroe Hwy., Lancaster
- 1349 Lynwood Dr., Lancaster
- 173 Solar Rd., Heath Springs
- 6491 Old Lancaster Hwy., Kershaw

## Spring Forward March 13

Daylight Savings Time begins Sunday, March 13. As you set your clocks ahead one hour think about other tasks you can perform to save energy in your home. Refer to the list below for some ideas.

- Change incandescent bulbs to compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs). You can save an average of \$30 or more in energy costs over each bulb's lifetime.
- Unplug small appliances and electronics. They use energy even when not in use.
- Change your furnace or air conditioner filter. For optimum efficiency filters should be changed or cleaned every month.
- Consider upgrading at least one older appliance to an Energy Star rated energy-efficient appliance. Check with retailers or manufactures for rebates.

These minor changes around your home can lead to energy savings. Visit [lynchesriver.com](http://lynchesriver.com) for more energy-saving ideas.



## News Briefs

### Reporting an Outage

The best way to report an outage is to call our automated outage reporting system at 675-LREC (5732) or toll free at 1-866-675-LREC.

Although there is information on our website on how to report an outage, outages should not be reported through our website.

### WIRE Meeting in March

Lynches River Electric Cooperative's chapter of Women Involved in Rural Electrification (WIRE) will meet at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, March 15 in the cooperative training room.

For details about WIRE meetings and activities call Lynches River at 672-6111 or toll free at 1-800-922-3486. More information is available at the following websites: [lynchesriver.com](http://lynchesriver.com) or [ecsc.org/wire.htm](http://ecsc.org/wire.htm).

### WIRE Cookbooks for Sale

The new WIRE cookbook contains recipes submitted by local residents. The cookbook makes a thoughtful gift and is a great addition to your cookbook collection. Cookbooks are \$15 each and may be purchased at Lynches River or from a WIRE member.

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[lynchesriver.com](http://lynchesriver.com)



## Tax credits still available at reduced levels

The 111th Congress approved extending some popular efficiency tax credits through Dec. 31, 2011, but at reduced levels.

The federal Tax Relief, Unemployment Insurance Reauthorization, and Job Creation Act of 2010 reduces the total lifetime credit that can be claimed on energy efficiency improvements made between 2006 and 2011, excluding 2008 when no credit was available.

The new total lifetime credit that can be claimed on energy efficiency improvements made between 2006 and 2011 is \$500, down from \$1500. Congress also lowered the percentage of efficiency upgrade costs consumers can recover, from 30 percent in 2009-2010 to 10 percent in 2011.

For members who have not applied for the energy efficiency tax credit before, this extension gives you a chance to recoup some of the costs needed to make your home more efficient.

There are maximum allowances for different upgrades you should be aware of. For instance, the tax credit limit for installing more energy-efficient windows is \$200. For a complete list of tax incentives visit [energytaxincentives.org](http://energytaxincentives.org).

### Claiming Tax Credits

Tax credits are beneficial because they directly reduce, dollar for dollar, any taxes you owe. Be sure to keep your receipts and your Manufacturer's Certification Statement (a signed statement from the manufacturer certifying the product or component qualifies for the tax credit) for your records. Then claim the credit on your taxes using IRS Form 5695.

For a list of federal, state and local energy efficiency rebates and tax credits, visit the Database for State Incentives for Renewables & Efficiency, a project funded by the U.S. Department of Energy, at [dsireusa.org](http://dsireusa.org).

*Source: Megan McKoy-Noe, CCC, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association*



*Artic blast - cont'd from page 1*

your lifestyle.

While the weather is beyond our control, Lynches River Electric Cooperative is committed to looking out for our members and their pocketbooks. We offer advice on ways to make your home more energy efficient to help reduce your energy use and lower your

bill. Some useful online energy efficiency tools can be accessed through our website at [lynchesriver.com/News and Information/Energy Tips](http://lynchesriver.com/News%20and%20Information/Energy%20Tips). You can even download our Energy Tips brochure. If you do not have Internet access, request a brochure by calling 843-672-6111 or 1-800-922-3486.