

Cooperative review

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 
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A Newsletter for Members of Union Power Cooperative

Straight Talk about Renewables *Clean Energy May Be Costly*

The talk these days is about renewable power sources and it's taking center stage in the news as well as on Capitol Hill. State and federal legislators are debating the issue of global warming and greenhouse gas emissions. This debate is leading to the discussion of legislation requiring incorporation of renewable energies (wind, hydro, solar, geothermal, and biofuel) into our nation's energy portfolio. At the federal level, the Energy Future Coalition's 25 x '25 plan would require 25 percent of energy to come from renewable resources by 2025. Many state legislatures, including North Carolina, are also discussing a renewable mandate. To meet the demands of any significant renewable requirement and to have measurable impact on our environment, legislation must encompass all segments of our economy including utilities, industries, manufacturing, transportation, and consumers. And while renewable technologies sound simple enough to implement and incorporate, there are many complicated and logistical questions that will need to be addressed to keep our electricity costs affordable.



electricity, hydrogen, and other energy products. Nuclear power is also gaining popularity. There are concerns over operating safety and waste disposal, which are being addressed, but some environmentalists and governments find nuclear to be appealing because it is relatively clean and emits no greenhouse gases. Hydrogen has also shown great promise for the future in the form of fuel cells. The issue is finding pure hydrogen, but researchers are diligently working to find viable sources of hydrogen.

Facts on Renewables and New Technologies

Renewables play an important role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions; however, each of these sources has its limitations. Technologies are still developing and obstacles arise when it comes to siting facilities. Also in most cases, the cost to produce energy through these technologies is high.

The nation's electric cooperatives are optimistic about renewables; however, they are advocating a slow approach to introducing them into the energy portfolio to avoid a negative impact on our nation's economy. It is important for consumers to know that nationally, coal remains one of the most inexpensive and abundant resources to produce electricity and will be a major source of energy for decades. Coal is used to generate 50 percent of the nation's electricity and 80 percent of that generated and sold by cooperatives.

Electric cooperatives are working to build clean-burning coal plants and looking at new technologies such as carbon capture and coal gasification. Coal gasification offers one of the most versatile and clean ways to convert coal into

Increased Demand

Demand for electricity is increasing. It is expected that by 2020 the world's energy demand will increase by 40 percent over what it is today. As demand continues to climb, we must build the necessary infrastructure to meet that demand—this includes substations, transmission lines, and generation facilities. It will be up to everyone to incorporate energy efficiency and conservation into their lifestyles so we can all contribute to slowing down the demand for energy. Union Power has always encouraged energy efficiency and conservation for our members and we have committed to providing energy information for our membership through our newsletter, website, and materials. We are looking out for you—telling your situation to our legislators and working to continue to provide you with clean, reliable electricity at reasonable prices. We must make wise choices and move slowly in introducing renewables that work effectively in our country and in our specific regions to avoid a major negative impact on our economy.

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Tony E. Herrin
Executive Vice President
and General Manager

Help spread the Word... **Copper Theft is Deadly.**

Copper Theft Bill Clears NC House

One of several bills to discourage the theft of copper and other metals has passed the NC House. House Bill 414 increases the identification requirements for individuals selling metals to a metals recycler. The bill also mandates that purchase receipts must be available for inspection by law enforcement, and metals recyclers will have a duty to report transactions if they believe that the metals are stolen.

House Bill 414 is the second bill to pass the House on the copper theft issue, which has been a problem for many industries. HB 414 will now move to the Senate.

Union Power has taken extra precautions and measures to protect our members, employees, and cooperative property with security and surveillance equipment at our office facilities and substations. We can always use the extra eyes of our members to watch for any suspicious activity around power lines and substations. Here are some tips to safeguard against electrical dangers and prevent copper theft.

- *Never enter or touch equipment inside a substation, stay away from power lines, and anything touching a wire.*
- *If you see something unusual with electric facilities, such as an open substation gate, open equipment, hanging wire, etc., contact Union Power immediately.*
- *If you see anyone around electric substations or electric facilities other than utility personnel or contractors, call the police.*
- *Store tools and wire cutters in a secure location, do not leave wires unattended at job sites, and consider installing motion detection lights at your home or business.*

The employees of Union Power take safety and security of the cooperative members and cooperative property seriously. Please help us spread the word that dealing with any metal and electricity is a dangerous combination, especially when it is done without permission or training.

Tony E. Herrin

We need your help to spread the word that copper theft is costly and can have deadly consequences. This past spring, at least three deaths—two in Massachusetts and one in Hawaii—occurred due to electrocutions or falls when thieves attempted to obtain copper wire from energized power lines.

North Carolina electric utilities are seeing an increase in this dangerous and potentially fatal crime. Across the country, more than a dozen deaths have been reported by utilities in the past year and an increase in outages to thousands of people.

Commitment to **COMMUNITY**



In June and July, Union Power Cooperative proudly sponsors two prominent events in Stanly County that celebrate the music of our region and the heritage of our nation. The 4th Annual Big Lick Bluegrass Festival was held from June 8–9 and attracted thousands to hear some great bands. Union Power is also sponsoring the 2007 Oakboro 4th of July Celebration, which will be held from June 29 through July 4.

Power points



Tips for Leaving Your Home for Vacation

How to Save Money and Protect Your Home

Vacationing can be one of the most exciting times of the year, but preparing for vacation can be stressful. There are the obvious chores that must be done in order to board your flight or get the mini-van rolling, but there are also a few not-so-obvious things that may help in your preparation for vacation.

Union Power offers these pieces of advice to save you money and protect your home as you prepare to leave for vacation:

- Turn your water heater down to the lowest setting. You will not need hot water while you are out of town, and this simple procedure can save you money.
- Turn your air conditioner up in the summer to reduce your electric bill while you are gone. Do try to keep the house at a comfortable temperature and try not to let it get too hot.
- Lower your heat when you vacation in the winter or fall, but do not allow your house to get too cold, which causes pipes to freeze and may be dangerous for any pets in the house.
- If you are planning to vacation in the winter, leave sinks dripping slowly to prevent pipes from freezing.
- Make sure all pipes are well insulated before you leave your home in the winter.
- Unplug all electronic devices in case of a storm, and inspect surge protectors to make sure they are properly installed.
- Make sure your refrigerator is on the lowest setting; this will reduce the amount of energy your home is using while you are gone.
- Unplug or disconnect your garage door.

Congratulations to the **GRADUATES OF** 2007

Union Power Cooperative awarded three high school graduates with a \$1,000 scholarship to attend a North Carolina four-year college or university. We are proud to have awarded these scholarships to students whose accomplishments in academics, leadership, and community service will go far to enhance the future of communities in which they will live and work.

Catherine Alicia Howell



Catherine is the daughter of Cathy Howell of Concord. She recently graduated from Central Cabarrus High School. She plans to attend UNC Charlotte this fall where she will study Civil or Biomedical Engineering.

Catherine's hobbies and interests include playing soccer, diving, and playing the piano. While in school she was involved in many clubs. Among them were National Honor Society, Beta Club, Key Club, Bible Club, and Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

Jessica Alisha Mullis



Jessica is the daughter of Charles and Lisa Mullis of Monroe. She recently graduated from Forest Hills High School. She plans to attend UNC Charlotte this fall to pursue a career in Psychology.

Jessica's hobbies and interests include tutoring elementary school students and participating in church activities. She was active in the marching and concert bands, Beta Club, and National Honor Society.

Megan A. Perdue



Megan recently graduated from Porter Ridge High School. She plans to begin her college career at Appalachian State University this fall to pursue an education in Political Science.

A few of Megan's hobbies include coaching and playing soccer, reading, and hiking. While in high school, she was involved in the MAC Club, Student Council, Student Advisory, and the Interact Club.

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Help NC GreenPower *Protect Your Environment*

You can make all the difference in the world—and in our state. For as little as \$4 a month, you can help build up North Carolina's clean power. Every \$4 donation will add one block of 100 kilowatt-hours of green energy to our state's power supply.

For your convenience, your contribution will be added to your monthly electric bill. Union Power Cooperative will collect contributions and send the entire amount directly to NC GreenPower.

Simply fill out, detach, and return to: **Union Power Cooperative, ATTN: Billing Department, P.O. Box 5014, Monroe, NC 28111-5014.** Or you may sign up online at www.union-power.com or call your local Union Power office at 1-800-922-6840 and ask to speak with a customer service representative.

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Providing electricity and energy services to over 62,000 members in Union, Stanly, Cabarrus, Mecklenburg, and Rowan counties.

ncGreenPower

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My monthly contribution will be:

- \$4 a month
 \$8 a month
 \$12 a month
 \$20 a month
 \$_____ a month
(any amount in increments of \$4)

Learn more about ncGreenPower at
www.ncgreenpower.org

Union Power Cooperative Account number

Name as it appears on your power bill

Street Address

City ST Zip

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Phone number

Phone number

E-mail

Signature