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Quality Equals Reliability

Since 2004, I have had the privilege of serving as a member of your Board at Central Alabama Electric Cooperative, and in that time, I have come to understand that there are similarities between the electric utility industry and manufacturing, the industry of my professional association for the past 37 years. In that time, one of the greatest lessons I've learned is that a high quality end-product requires a well planned-out process and exceptional teamwork. This is also true in the utility industry, and plays a vital role in our new planning process—continuous strategic planning.

Quality is a key focus area in our continuous strategic plan, and in the electric utility industry quality means reliability and excellent service.

Reliability is often accomplished by using short- and long- range plans, which consider high growth communities and any upgrades needed to the infrastructure that delivers power to homes and businesses. For example, the current plan calls for upgrades to the Titus substation and completing the construction of the Ray substation to meet the growing needs of the area.

Quality is enhanced through technology. Incorporating new software helps streamline work processes, such as payment processing, mobile service orders, outage prevention and vehicle routing through Geospatial Information Systems (GIS). Technology also allows crews to be dispatched quickly to restore power in the event of an outage. Through the strategic planning process, it was determined that a mirrored back-up dispatch hub in a separate location was needed in case the main system became unusable.

While materials and technology are crucial in the process of delivering reliable power, having the right people involved is also essential to customer satisfaction. CAEC employees are armed with the tools needed to provide quality service, from customer service representatives who can compare a member's energy use with weather data and trained energy service representatives who can pinpoint home efficiency options to a team that disperses important information through the world of social media. Monthly reports are also generated on the services that directly impact you, such as phone hold and power restoration times, as well as a quarterly goal through the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) and phone surveys. This information is analyzed and monitored on a regular basis to gauge how improvements can be made.

When it comes to quality, it is most often accomplished through planning, and in my experience, it also comes through people who have a desire to exceed expectations. In my assessment, the essence of quality is realized when you, our members, receive reliable electric service at the lowest possible cost from friendly, knowledgeable employees at your cooperative. ■



CAEC Trustee
Charles Byrd
At-Large Trustee





A Sunny Annual Meeting & Member Appreciation Day

It's been a very wet summer, and although dark clouds made a distant and brief appearance, CAEC's 2013 Annual Meeting and Member Appreciation Day was an overall sunny affair for the attending members and their families.

A total of 3,952 members registered and voted by mail, an additional 535 registered on site the day of the meeting with an estimated 1,800 in attendance at the event held at the cooperative's headquarters in Prattville.



Children bounced in several bounce houses and zoomed down a large inflatable slide while also enjoying face painting. The more adventurous had a chance to get up close and personal with the many critters our crews encounter in the field, including snakes and lizards, during the Cooperative Environment show. For adult members, several activities, including free health screenings from Baptist Health Systems (blood pressure, cholesterol); healthy lifestyle information from community and wellness

groups; and energy-efficiency products and tips were offered. Live music also filled the air with bluegrass performed by Henderson Highway and gospel tunes by the Men of Music.

Hot dogs, chips, drinks and ice cream were enjoyed by all as door prizes were awarded throughout the afternoon, concluding with the grand prize drawing of \$500, won by George E. Crowell.

During the business meeting, Wayne Gruenloh, CPA and Owner of Gruenloh and Associates of Robertsedale, Ala., presented CAEC's audit and gave the Cooperative an unqualified opinion, which is the highest rating that can be given.

In the Board of Trustees election, incumbents Mark

Presnell Sr., District 2; David Kelley Sr., District 5; Ruby J. Neeley, District 9; and Charles Byrd, At-Large, were re-elected to three-year terms.

CAEC President and CEO Tom Stackhouse briefed members about the valuable work being accomplished by cooperatives, such as CAEC, through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA) International Program.

Just as co-op employees brought power to homes throughout rural areas just 75 years ago, they are again helping bring electricity to villages around the world. He stressed that the projects, funded by NRECA, have sent our linemen and engineers to Guatemala over the last few years where they have begun energizing opportunities and made a lasting impact on countless lives, just as we did here in central Alabama 75 years ago. ■



Chilton County

In the central part of the state is a county that has gained permanent notoriety as the peach capital of Alabama -- Chilton County.

Established on Dec. 30, 1868, as Baker County and later re-named on Dec. 17, 1874, in honor of William Parish Chilton, Sr. (1810-1871), a lawyer who served as chief justice of the Alabama Supreme Court, the county was created by lands taken from Autauga, Bibb, Perry and Shelby counties. The Coosa River forms the eastern boundary of the county and it encompasses 699 square miles, or 447,360 acres.

With roots going back to the mid-nineteenth century, the peach industry has provided Alabama growers with a viable source of income and alternatives to traditional staples, such as cotton and corn. Although more than two-thirds of the cultivation has been confined to Chilton County, the peach has become the state's leading commercial fruit.

Once named "Goose Pond" until 1871, Clanton, the most populated city in the county, was founded by Alfred Baker in 1868 when Chilton was formed. Clanton was named in honor of General James H. Clanton, a brigadier in the Confederate Army, and was incorporated on April 23, 1873.

Clanton is well known for its 120-foot high, 500,000-gallon water tower, located at exit 212 on I-65, constructed and painted in the shape of a giant ripe peach, symbolizing the importance of the peach industry to the county. The water tower

was designed and built in 1994 by the Chicago Bridge and Iron Company.

During the peach harvest in June, the city of Clanton celebrates the community's peach farmers with an exciting annual event in

Chilton County -- the Peach Festival. The celebration includes pageants, a fun run, a fishing tournament, a cook-off, a parade, a street festival and concert and a charity peach auction. Clanton has hosted the annual Chilton County Peach Festival since 1952. Also in June is the Peach Jam Jubilee, a one-day event held at Clanton City Park with live music, rides for the kids, contests, great food, and a broad range of activities for all ages.

In October, the Grand Ole Pumpkin Patch opens for an entire month of entertainment. From hay rides to the pumpkin patch in a covered wagon to learning about our Native American history, there is something for everyone.

A community named after a purple, fragrant flower that grew in abundance in the area, Verbena used to be a resort town in the 1870s-1880s, when wealthy aristocrats from Montgomery and other southerners began coming there to escape the annual yellow fever epidemics usually brought to port cities by persons traveling on river boats. People who intended to stay only a summer in the area decided to make it their permanent residence even after the cause for yellow fever was found in 1900, bringing an end to the epidemic in Alabama.

Founded in 1964, Confederate Memorial Park in Mountain Creek is a tribute to the men and women

who took up arms in defense of their home state during the Civil War. It is located on the site of the state-run Confederate Soldiers' Home, which operated from 1902 to 1939 as the state's only care facility

and residence for aging veterans of the Confederate Army, their wives and widows. Today, the 102-acre



Confederate Memorial Park in Mountain Creek sits on 102 acres



Minooka Park is home to many ATV trails on 295 acres

Photo submitted by Neal Ousley

park includes the original facility and other historic structures, a museum, a research facility and two Soldiers' Home cemeteries containing the graves of more than 300 Confederate soldiers.

Like so many other small towns between Birmingham and Montgomery, Jemison came into existence due to the building of the Louisville and Nashville (L&N) Railroad. Before the railroad was built, stagecoach drivers and

tradesmen rested here on their way to the north and south. The first stagecoach line based in the town was established in the 1840s by its namesake, Colonel Robert Jemison, Jr. Jemison was incorporated in 1907 and reincorporated in December of 1919.

Jemison features Minooka Park, first of its kind in the United States, and primarily known for its ATV (all-terrain vehicle) trails. On 295 acres, it's considered among the best in the Southeast with miles of trails dedicated to off-road enthusiasts, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, primitive and motor home camping.

Proud of its Scandinavian heritage, Thorsby was established in 1895 and incorporated in 1901 by Scandinavian immigrants who had originally settled in the north but came south seeking a mild climate suitable for farming and better health. The town was named after one of the three founders, Theodore T. Thorson. Today, the town has very few Scandinavians living in the area, but maintains a museum in the old Norwegian Lutheran Church building named Helen Jenkins Chapel. Around the middle of October, the town celebrates its heritage

with the Annual Swedish Fest that features numerous activities from pageants and parades to seminars on the town's history.

European settlers migrated to Maplesville from Georgia and the Carolinas following the Battle of Horseshoe Bend in 1814. The town was named after Stephen W. Maples, a merchant and the town's first postmaster. Maplesville was originally established in the early nineteenth century at the crossroads of two important trading routes going from Tuscaloosa to Montgomery and from Selma to Birmingham. The original town site began to decline in the early 1850s after two railway lines were completed three miles west of town and residents and business people began moving closer to the railroad.



The Maplesville Train Depot served as a shipping point for many goods including cotton

Photo courtesy of the Chilton County Chamber of Commerce

A depot was also constructed at that same location and because of Maplesville's abundant rail access, it became a shipping point for cotton and other goods from the surrounding area. Maplesville incorporated in 1914 and reincorporated in 1947. The town celebrates Maplesville Heritage Days annually in April.

As the heart of peach country in Alabama with many peach-themed events and attractions, the county also offers a wealth of recreational opportunities with three area lakes and acres of forest land. ■

Sources: The Heritage of Chilton County/Alabama, Encyclopedia of Alabama, Chilton County Chamber of Commerce



Know How to Survive Auto Accidents Involving Power Lines



Darren Maddox is CAEC's Manager of Training and Safety

Iverheard a conversation the other day concerning what you should do if you're in an auto accident involving power lines. Suggestions ranged from the natural instinct to flee from danger to jumping from the car and rolling away. Unfortunately, in vehicle accidents that bring down power lines, our natural inclinations, such as these, can lead to tragic results.

The simplest answer as to what to do if your car hits a power pole, or otherwise brings a power line down, is to stay in your vehicle and wait until the local electric utility arrives on the scene and ensures that lines have been de-energized. If others stop to help, roll down the window and warn them not to touch the car or the power line. Ask them to phone 911 and contact the local electric utility immediately or if you should come upon or witness an accident involving toppled power poles and lines, don't leave your vehicle to approach the scene.

According to the National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration, tens of thousands of accidents each year occur where power poles are struck by cars or

large equipment. Each one of these accidents has the potential to bring down power lines.

In the vast majority of those incidents, the safest place to remain is inside the car. Only in the rare instance of fire should people exit a vehicle. Then, they must know how to do so safely. Open the door and jump away from the vehicle so no part of your body touches the vehicle and the ground at the

same time. Make sure to jump with both your feet together so that your feet land on the ground at the same time, avoiding any downed lines. With both feet in constant contact with the ground, shuffle, don't hop as hopping could make you unstable and fall. It's vital to

remember to never let your feet leave the ground as you shuffle away from the scene. If the car is driveable, you can also drive a short and safe distance away from the downed powerlines.

Remember, surviving the accident might not be enough to stay alive if there are power lines on your vehicle. Stay calm and if at all possible remain in your vehicle until utility crews can safely de-energize the lines. ■



Would you know what to do if your vehicle was in an accident involving power lines? Knowing what to do could be the difference between life or death.



Water Heater Rebates

CAEC offers rebates for water heaters. Purchase your new electric water heater from any store and receive a rebate for meeting the following criteria:

*Electric water heaters only
(cannot be tankless)*

Minimum energy factor of .92

Participation in CAEC's Peak Shaving Program
(at no additional charge)*

Water heaters will be inspected to verify:

Installation at member's address

Manufacturer's Information:

Name and spec information (which includes model and serial numbers and the energy factor)

Proof of purchase:

Copy of receipt and store name

Rebates are available in the following amounts:


Under 80 gal:	up to \$235
80 gal & up:	up to \$375

For more information about our rebate program, call (800) 545-5735, ext. 2118 or (334) 351-2118.

**To learn more about CAEC's Peak Shaving program, visit www.caec.coop.*



Central Alabama
Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

A Clear Picture of Television Energy Usage

The days are getting shorter and cooler, which will lead many of us to spend more time in the house watching our favorite shows or sporting events. A 2011 Nielson report found the average American household owns 2.5 televisions and 31 percent of us have four or more sets in our homes. According to the National Resources Defense Council (NRDC), U.S. televisions use more than 46 billion kilowatt-hours (kWh) annually, or about 4 percent of total residential power consumption.

But which type of television is the best when it comes to energy use? The most common found in our living rooms are the traditional cathode-ray tube (CRT) sets, plasma, LED (Light Emitting Diode) and LCD (Liquid-Crystal Display). You might be shocked to find out that of these four, it is the CRT that is the energy hog—drawing more power per unit of screen area than the other three.

Research conducted by E Source, an energy efficiency and technology company, in 2011 compared a 55-inch of each style for five hours in active, or “on,” mode. The CRT set used a staggering 400 watts (W) followed distantly by the plasma and LCD sets at 165 W and finally by the LED at 155 W. The data also revealed that the same televisions in standby mode (when the television is turned off, but still plugged in and drawing some power) for 19 hours a day, the CRT drew 8 W compared to the LCD drawing .4 W. And a 25-inch CRT used more power than a 35-inch LCD at 95 W and 65 W respectively.

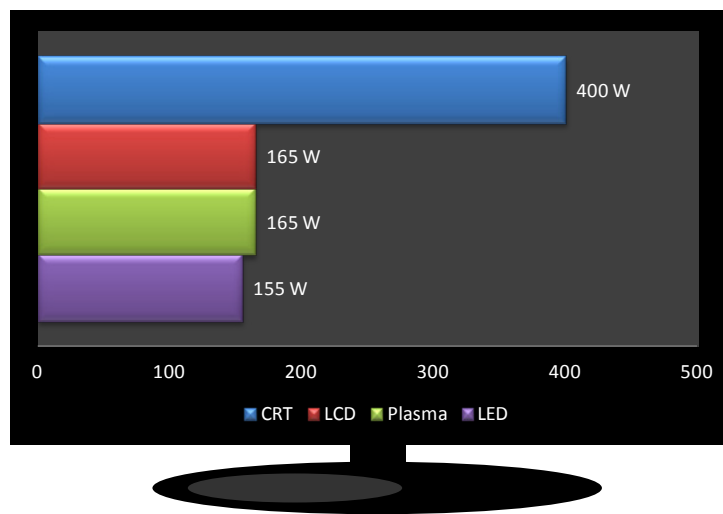
Many find this hard to believe, as it was plasma TVs having a reputation for being major energy drains. There was some justification to this in the past, when an average

model drew more power than a CRT or LCD, but today’s plasma draws nearly the same power as a comparable LCD in sizes larger than 31 inches.

Why the jump in efficiency? The increased manufacture of larger, flat screen televisions left the CRT to be, in essence, phased out of the commercial market when production ceased in 2007. This left plasma, LCD and LED models to follow many sets of revised energy standards set by Energy Star and state regulations.

Another energy drain connected to our home’s TVs is the increased use of set-top box receivers. More than 80

percent of us subscribe to some form of pay television service with approximately 160 million set-top boxes (including DVRs), nearly all of which are owned and installed by cable, satellite or phone providers. NRDC found that in 2010, these boxes consumed 27 billion kilowatt-hours (kWh) of electricity, or the equivalent of the annual output of nine average (500 MW) coal-fired power plants. They also noted that two-thirds of their annual energy usage occurs when people are not even watch-



Screen Shock: The graph above shows that your traditional CRT TV may be causing an energy drain on your wallet when compared to other models, such as LCD, LED and plasma sets.

ing or recording content.

So what can you do to increase your TV’s energy efficiency? It may be a good idea to replace your CRT set for a more efficient model. Be sure to look for Energy Star ratings and read labels to estimate the annual energy consumption. If you already own an LCD TV, turn down the backlight in the television’s settings—you’ll save energy and still retain picture quality. Also, if you have TVs in multiple rooms and use a set-top box, consolidate to a multi-room model. And if your TV or box provides a power saver mode, use it or unplug both devices when you go out of town. ■