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The Value of Power in Your Hands

At one point in time, as we've prepared to leave our home, we have uttered the following phrase: *"Don't forget to turn the lights off."* As a parent of three, I've used that phrase countless times during the years my children lived at home. It served as a reminder that we don't need to waste energy or spend more on our power bill than necessary.

When it comes to where we spend our money, electricity remains a great value when compared to all the available necessities and services. During my 32 years of service in the electric utility industry, I, like most of you have witnessed the cost of food, gasoline, phone service, clothing and other goods sharply rise over the years, while for the most part, the cost of electricity per kilowatt hour has remained stable—with the cost of a day's use of electricity averaging less than a fast food meal.

While electricity rates have been relatively stable, energy demands have increased with the introduction of a more technology-reliant lifestyle and larger homes with more appliances. In fact, as a cooperative, we've seen our approach evolve from one of introducing members to the increased conveniences electricity brought to homes 75 years ago, to one of helping our members of today be more conscious of how power is used in the home.

In a recent survey conducted by the Demand Institute on the housing-related desires of more than 10,000 American households, the number one category was increased home energy efficiency, beating out other areas such as home renovations and more square footage. Of those who answered the survey, only 36 percent were satisfied with their home's current level of efficiency.

We at CAEC know that many of you feel the same way and we want to help. We offer several programs that allow our members to decide on how much electricity is used each day. Our Prepay program is a prime example that has helped numerous members become more aware of their daily energy habits, helping them save an average of 5 to 12 percent on their bill. Even for those of you not enrolled in Prepay billing, you can still view your home's daily energy usage through the "Pay Your Bill" button on our website and mobile app.

In addition to energy consumption monitoring, we also offer programs that help reveal areas that, with improvement, can reduce wasted electricity. We have conducted countless home energy audits over the years, which have helped members save on their power bill. We also recognize that while many of these problem areas can be solved with simple and inexpensive fixes such as weather stripping and caulking, there are some measures that may be costly, so we offer rebates on heat-pumps and electric water heaters in addition to a low interest efficiency loan program available through a partnership with PowerSouth and Regions Bank.

While we can't always be there to remind our members to turn the lights off before walking out the door, we can continue adding even more value to the electricity members purchase from us by offering programs to help save energy dollars. ■



Tom Stackhouse
President/CEO

Bright Ideas Grants Awarded to Creative Classroom Projects

Developing leadership abilities, studying microscopic organisms, learning about space and building medieval weaponry are just some of the ways students will catapult their knowledge, thanks in part to the Bright Ideas Grant Program.

CAEC's Board of Trustees presented grants to area teachers during a January ceremony and reception held at the cooperative's headquarters in Prattville. Applications had been evaluated by a panel of judges from local community associations. From the 38 grant submissions, the judges selected 15 projects, totaling a \$16,000 investment to benefit more than 3,600 students in Autauga, Chilton and Elmore counties.

"Thanks to funding from this grant program, we will be able to develop leadership qualities in countless students as they prepare for the next step in life after graduation and beyond, something that can directly impact our community as they become our future leaders," said Lisa Price of East Memorial Christian Academy who received a grant for the EMCA Student Leadership program, which will introduce all juniors and seniors at the school to the many principles and skills of leadership.

Founded in 1998, the program has the goal of supporting creative, interesting and effective initiatives not usually covered by school funding. Grants are awarded to individuals or teams in public, private and home schools within CAEC's service area.

"Perhaps nothing has as much of an impact on our children than what they learn in the classroom," said CAEC President and CEO Tom Stackhouse. "We are honored to be able to provide assistance to our educators who willingly devote themselves to inspire our future leaders by giving them all the tools they need to be successful."

Seventeen years after its inception, more than 100,000 students in all grade levels and subject areas have benefited from Bright Ideas grants totaling \$256,000.

A full listing of this year's recipients along with more information on the program is available at caec.coop. Application information for the 2015-2016 grant process will appear later this year in the September issue of *Alabama Living* magazine. ■



Autauga County Grant Recipients



Chilton County Grant Recipient



Elmore County Grant Recipients

Being a Part of Something Special

What are the Cooperative Principles and how do they impact you?

There are 47,000 plus cooperatives in the United States, offering everything from milk and orange juice to banking and tools. Of these, there are more than 900 electric cooperatives that generate and distribute power for 42 million people in 47 states. And while there are many different types of cooperatives across the country and the world, we all have one characteristic in common: our operations are based on seven core cooperative principles.

These principles and values were adopted by the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA). Cooperatives trace the roots of these principles to the first modern cooperative founded in Rochdale, England in 1844. This co-op

was formed by 28 weavers who pooled their savings and opened the first successful consumer co-op. Other forms of co-ops had tried to organize in the past, but the Rochdale pioneers were successful by developing a list of operating principles to govern their organization.

Over 170 years later, cooperatives still abide by these seven principles that allow us to do business with the members in mind. Throughout the year we will be highlighting each principle in *Alabama Living* to help you gain a better understanding of what makes a cooperative different from a traditional business model and how we exemplify these values each day. ■

Seven Cooperative Principles

VOLUNTARY AND OPEN MEMBERSHIP

Cooperatives are voluntary organizations open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL

Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions. The elected representatives are accountable to the membership. In primary cooperatives, members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote) and cooperatives at other levels are organized in a democratic manner.

MEMBERS' ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the cooperative. Members usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing the cooperative, possibly by setting up reserves, part of which at least would be indivisible; benefitting members in proportion to their transactions with the cooperative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE

Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organizations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their cooperative autonomy.

EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INFORMATION

Cooperatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so that they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperatives. They inform the general public, particularly young people and opinion leaders, about the nature and benefits of cooperation.

COOPERATION AMONG COOPERATIVES

Cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.

CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY

While focusing on member needs, cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies accepted by their members.



Voluntary and Open Membership

Why this principle still applies to electric cooperatives

Voluntary and Open Membership: Cooperatives are voluntary organizations, open to all people able to use its services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

When the original 28 members of the Rochdale Pioneers came together to form the first, successful cooperative in 1844, they did so with a vision of a better social order. This vision included each member being equally responsible and, just as importantly, being treated as an equal. Any person, if they so chose, could participate in the cooperative and was to be treated justly and fairly with the same rights and benefits as everyone else, as long as they accepted the requirements of being a member. These co-op members also play a major role in how the cooperative conducts business—much of which is described in the additional seven principles, which we will review in the coming months, as well as the co-op’s bylaws.

This first principle of Voluntary and Open Membership came into action for electric cooperatives when power became available to many Americans for the first time in the 30s and 40s. When Central Alabama Electric Cooperative was formed back in 1938, every potential member had the option to sign up for or refuse service. While it may be hard to understand today, there are numerous stories from electric co-ops throughout the country where people believed electricity was not a necessary part of life. Of course over time, many people changed their minds and voluntarily

became members of their local cooperatives.

Today, the vast majority of people and businesses throughout the country do not choose their electric utility company. In Alabama, state law has determined the “territories” for these utilities, which keeps infrastructure costs from being unnecessarily duplicated. Through “Open Membership,” however, all residences and businesses in the service territory of CAEC are wel-

come to receive power for their homes, companies, outbuildings and rental properties.

Co-ops continually strive to ensure that your membership provides value to you - not just by delivering reliable power, but by being an active part of the communities we serve and by offering unique benefits.

At CAEC, we have programs such as the Co-op Connections Card, Prepay billing, usage monitoring, home energy audits, rebates and much more, which are all designed to add value to your membership.

When you agree to become a member of an electric cooperative, we also agree that serving you in the most efficient, reliable and valuable way possible will be our number one goal and we thank you for that opportunity. ■



We are owned by those we serve.



Are All Fires the Same?



Darren Maddox, Manager of Safety & Training

Where there's smoke, there's fire. And while all blazes may look the same, fires can start from a variety of sources and should not be treated equally—especially electrical fires. Remember the acronym F.I.R.E for electrical safety:

Find the source before it starts

Old or faulty wiring often emerges as the main culprit in causing electrical fires. In electrical fires, heat from wiring or an overloaded system can provide the strike that leads to a fire.

But there are often signs even before a fire starts.

Investigate the signs

If you notice flickering lights, recurring trips in a circuit breaker or a tell-tale sizzling sound around wiring and hot light switches, call a certified electrician. These may indicate an imminent fire hazard.

Remedy the problem

If you have any signs of a pending fire or have worries about old wiring, contact a professional electrician. Other precautions include such safeguards as using the correct wattage bulbs, avoiding the use of damaged cords or running them under rugs, not overloading outlets or extension cords and routinely checking appliances for signs of wear and tear or overheating.

Exit the Building and Learn to Extinguish Properly

If you are faced with an electrical fire, call 911 immediately and have everyone exit the building. If you feel you must face a small fire, know the proper way to approach it.

- Never use water on an electrical fire. Water conducts electricity, so it will not smother the fire and may lead to electrocution.
- If the circuit breaker does not trip in the area on fire, shut off the main breaker to the house if possible. Be sure to approach the breaker only if the fire is not nearby, you have an exit route, and your hands are dry.
- Never use a Class A fire extinguisher on an electrical fire. Use a Class C or a multi-purpose ABC model.
- Again, if the fire is not quickly extinguished, exit the building.

Even though the source and treatment of fires may differ, they produce the same, damaging results. You are no match for the force of a house fire—learn F.I.R.E. and protect yourself. ■



Never use water on an electrical fire, use a Class C or multipurpose ABC fire extinguisher.

CAEC Rate Information

	Access Charge	+	Distribution Charge/kWh	+	Wholesale Power Charge/kWh
Residential	.99/day		.01611		.08865
Small Power Service	.86/day		.04687		.077737
Medium Power Service	.99/day		.04169		.07124

Rates are designed to recover the cost of purchasing wholesale power, operating expenses and a margin level required by our lenders.

For more rate information, visit our website www.caec.coop.

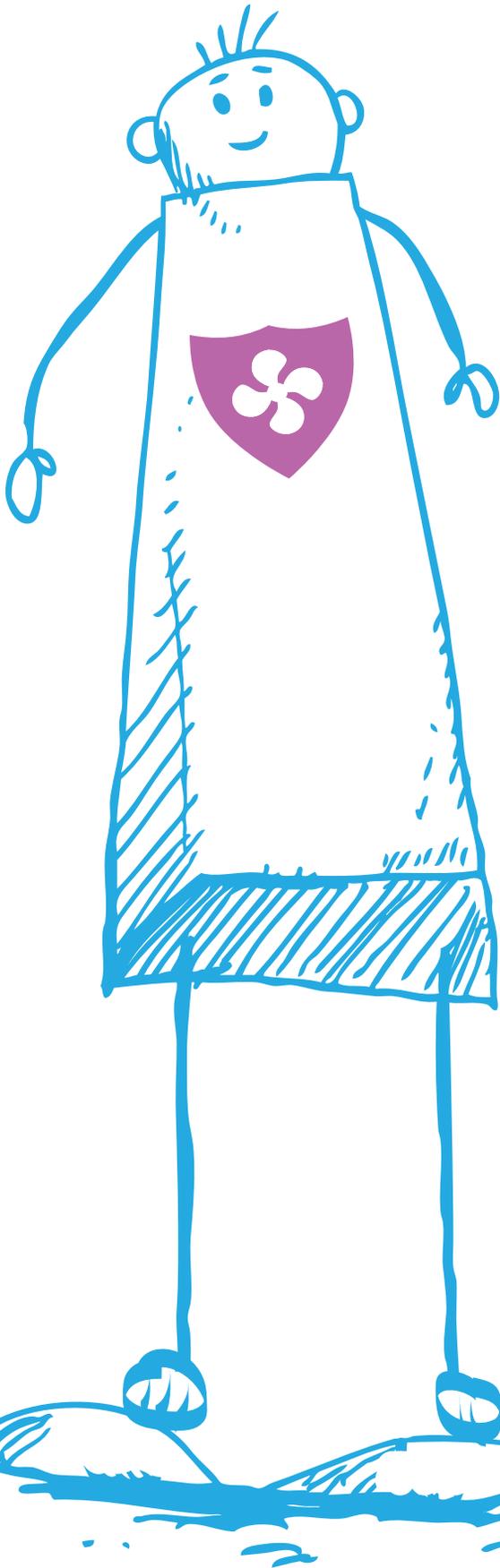
DEFINITIONS

Access Charge – Your daily portion of the fixed infrastructure cost

Distribution Charge – Energy charge based on your consumption and remaining fixed cost

Wholesale Power Cost – Power generated and delivered to you

CAEC offers a Heat pump Rebate Program



STANDARD HOMES

Air Source

15 SEER - **\$150 per ton**
16 SEER or greater - **\$200 per ton**

Dual Fuel

15 SEER - **\$300 per ton**
16 SEER or greater - **\$350 per ton**

Geothermal

17.1 EER or greater - **\$600 per ton**

MANUFACTURED HOMES

Air Source

13 SEER - **\$100 per ton** (if moving from a furnace to an electric heat pump)
15 SEER - **\$150 per ton**
16 SEER or greater - **\$200 per ton**

Dual Fuel

13 SEER - **\$250 per ton**
15 SEER - **\$300 per ton**
16 SEER or greater - **\$350 per ton**

For more information, visit our website www.caec.coop or call (800) 545-5735, ext. 2118

Load calculation required to receive rebate.



Central Alabama
Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Have an idea to make your home more energy efficient, but not the finances?

Let CAEC help you with a loan for efficiency improvements!

Does your home need better insulation? New windows and exterior doors? A more efficient heat pump?

interest rates – ensuring you can get the efficiency improvements you need at a fair cost.

If the answer is yes, but you're wondering how to pay for these improvements, CAEC, in conjunction with PowerSouth and Regions Bank, has developed a loan program for financing weatherization in your home with low annual

Contact CAEC today for more details on energy efficiency for your home. Call us at (800) 545-5735 ext. 2118.

"I felt drafts throughout my home and decided to have a CAEC Energy Services Representative (ESR) come out and perform an audit," said retired Air Force Lt. Colonel John Anderson in Wetumpka.

"The audit was priceless and it gave me a baseline of what I needed to improve the comfort of living in my home and reduce my energy cost. It was at that point I learned about the loan program which includes a checklist with step-by-step instructions to make the process easy," said Anderson.

