



# Roanoke Electric **FLASHES**

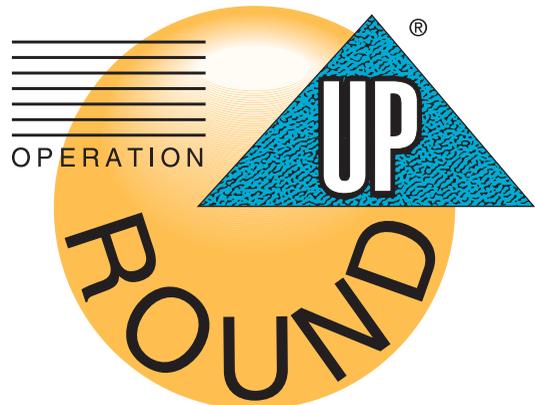
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## Roanoke EC's Operation RoundUp awards grants to six area non-profits

Roanoke Electric's Operation RoundUp program awarded a total of \$5,900 in grants to five area non-profit organizations for the 1st Quarter of 2009. Those organizations were:

- American Cancer Society Relay for Life of Bertie County, \$500
- American Cancer Society Relay for Life of Hertford/Gates, \$500
- Rheasville Volunteer Fire Department, Inc., Roanoke Rapids, N.C., \$1,400
- Mostmen, Mostmen, Inc., Cofield, N.C., \$1,500
- Halifax Fire and Rescue, Inc. Halifax, N.C., \$2,000

The Operation RoundUp program is administered by the Roanoke Electric Care Trust, who grants funds quarterly to non-profit organizations that serve local communities. Members of Roanoke Electric round their electric bills to the next whole dollar to create a reliable source of funds that provide educational, charitable, or economic development services.



If your non-profit organization is located in Bertie, Hertford, Gates, Halifax, Northampton Chowan or Perquimans counties, you are invited to submit grant applications to Roanoke Electric's Operation RoundUp program. Grant requests can be made for up to \$5,000 and are given out in January, April, July, and October. The next grant application deadline is 5 p.m. on Friday, April 3.

For more information or to receive an application, visit our Web site at [www.roanokeelectric.com](http://www.roanokeelectric.com).

## Co-op office closed for Easter holiday

The Roanoke Electric Cooperative office will be closed in observance of Easter on Friday, April 10. For power outages, call (800) 358-9437.



# Roanoke Electric offers scholarship for high school senior

Established in 1985, the Roanoke Electric Cooperative Scholarship of \$1,000 will be awarded to a selected senior whose parents or legal guardians are members of the cooperative. The scholarship is to aid a young person who:

- has exhibited an understanding of the cooperative way of doing business.
- has limited financial resources and exhibit outstanding scholastic and leadership abilities in his/her school and community.

## Criteria

The criteria for the selection is:

*Need:* 50 percent

*Scholastic Achievement:* 25 percent

*Extra Curricular Activities and*

*Cooperative Question:* 25 percent

In addition, the winner must have been accepted by an accredited two- or four-year college or university in North Carolina.

The Scholarship money will be paid directly to the college or university according to the institution's payment policy, after Roanoke EC receives a letter



from the recipient confirming his/her enrollment. Should the recipient withdraw from college, reimbursement of unused monies shall be returned to Roanoke EC. In the event the recipient receives financial assistance from other sources, which would constitute a full scholarship, he/she shall notify Roanoke EC and relinquish rights to the scholarship. The monies shall then be awarded to the runner-up provided that person continues to meet all requirements.

For more information or to obtain an application, visit our Web site at [www.roanokeelectric.com](http://www.roanokeelectric.com)

# Get In Gear! Students, apply now for summer basketball camp scholarship

Roanoke Electric Cooperative and North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation (NCEMC) are proud to offer the Touchstone Energy N.C. State Women's

Basketball Camp & Roy Williams Basketball Camp Scholarship program.

The N.C. State Women's Basketball program enables female students in sixth through eighth

grades to attend the N.C. State Women's Basketball Camp at N.C. State University in Raleigh, with all camp costs paid by Roanoke Electric Cooperative and NCEMC.

The Roy Williams program allows male students in sixth through eighth grades to attend the Roy Williams Basketball camp at UNC-Chapel Hill in Chapel Hill, with all camp costs paid by Roanoke Electric Cooperative and NCEMC.

Touchstone Energy Basketball Camp Scholarship winners will learn fundamental basketball skills, teamwork and friendship. Camp graduates learn new skills that will enable them to excel on and off the basketball court. Attendees also get a chance to meet other talented players and even get to pose with the COACH for a picture they can take home to show off to their friends.

The Roy Williams camp will be held June 21–25. The date for the N.C. State Women's camp had not been determined at press time due to coach Kay Yow's passing in late January. The Touchstone Energy Basketball Camp Scholarship is an expression of the electric co-ops' historic commitment to the community on behalf of its 2.4 million N.C. consumers.

The deadline to apply is March 27, 2009. Applicants will be judged on their academics, extra-curricular activities and an essay. Students can download an application at [www.ncelectriccooperatives.com](http://www.ncelectriccooperatives.com). For more information on the Roy Williams Basketball Camp, visit [www.roywilliamsbasketballcamp.com](http://www.roywilliamsbasketballcamp.com).



**Sports Camp Scholarships**

# Tax credits among ways to fund home efficiency improvements

The idea of owning a more efficient home—and paying lower utility bills—has widespread appeal, but finding ways to fund needed energy efficiency improvements can be difficult during hard economic times. Fortunately, there are several ways to recover some of your expenses when planning your next project.

Through the federal Energy Improvement and Extension Act of 2008, Uncle Sam offers a personal tax credit of up to \$500 for energy efficiency upgrades made to existing homes this year. You can recover up to 10 percent of the cost of adding insulation materials and exterior doors, windows, and roofs designed to help reduce your home's heat loss or gain.

Want to install a new central air conditioner or air-source heat pump? Your credit could be as much as \$300. The benefit covers up to 100 percent of the cost for qualifying heating and cooling units, with a maximum credit of \$500 for all improvements.

In addition, other federal incentives are available.

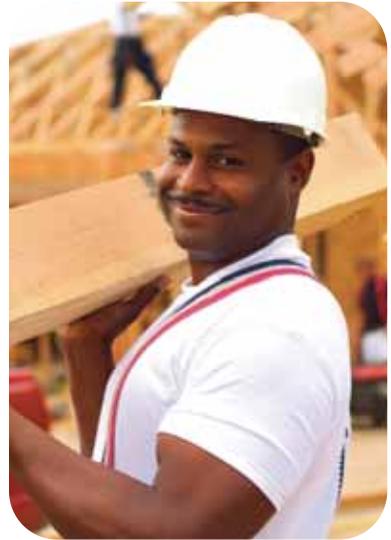
While solar panels, solar water heaters, and geothermal heat pumps are expensive, you may qualify for a tax credit equal to 30 percent of the installation cost if your projects are approved by the Solar Rating and Certification Corporation or ENERGY STAR, depending on the project's scope. Solar panels do not have a maximum limit for this

benefit as of 2009; solar water heaters and geothermal heat pumps carry a \$2,000 limit. Check with your local electric cooperative before proceeding with any type of solar project.

Some state government offices offer further subsidies or rebates to consumers who want to make a home more efficient.

For a listing of state and local energy efficiency assistance available, visit the Database for State Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency, a project funded by the U.S. Department of Energy, at [www.dsireusa.org](http://www.dsireusa.org). For details on how the right appliances can help you cut your electric bills, visit [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov).

*Source: Database for State Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency.*



## Don't get burned by energy scams

The devices could not be simpler—a small gray box that plugs into an electrical outlet in the home. The accompanying advertising insisted that these products, costing up to \$300, could shrink electric bills by 10 percent and reduce energy consumption by 25 percent. In times of rising energy prices, who wouldn't want to try them?

In May of last year, the Texas Office of Attorney General took legal action against the firm offering what it called the Xpower Energy Saver or Mega Power Saver, which sell for \$200 and \$300, respectively. A lab at the University of Texas at Austin tested the units and concluded that they could not live up to their promises.

In addition, the lab revealed that the products are, in reality, ordinary capacitors. Capacitors are regularly used by electricians, and they can be purchased for less than \$20.

Electric cooperatives warn consumers to beware of such claims. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) also warns consumers to be careful about marketers

or home-improvement contractors aggressively trying to sell energy-saving products. "Don't fall for high-pressure sales pitches from contractors or door-to-door sales people," says the FTC. Consumers should look carefully and check independent information—such as from state or local consumer protection offices like the Better Business Bureau—about companies selling such items. Your electric cooperative can also help you make sense of energy-savings claims.



# Follow safety tips for safe, spring chores



After spending long winter days indoors, most folks love to get outside in spring, even if it's just to do chores. However, outdoor chores can bring electrical hazards.

For example, ladders contacting power lines cause 9 percent of electrocution-related deaths each year, according to recent data from the

Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). Landscaping, gardening, and farming equipment cause another 7 percent. To avoid electrical hazards, make sure you and your family follow these simple tips:

## General

- Teach children to stay away from electric transformers and substations and explain what posted warning signs mean.
- Avoid damp conditions when using electricity. Keep all electrical devices and cords away from water.
- Place waterproof covers on all outdoor outlets.

- Install ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) in outlets where water may be present.
- Only use extension cords marked for outdoor use; match power needs of an electric tool or appliance to the cord's label information.
- Dial 8-1-1, the national "Call Before You Dig" phone number, at least 72 hours before engaging in any type of excavation work. Local utilities will be notified to mark the approximate location of any underground lines on your property.

## Power Tools

- Inspect power tools and appliances for frayed cords, broken plugs, and cracked or broken housing, and repair or replace damaged items.
- Store power tools indoors.
- Unplug outdoor tools when not in use.
- Do not carry power tools by the cord.

## Ladders

- Use only a fiberglass or wooden ladder if you must work near overhead wires.
- Never touch a person or an object that has made contact with a power line.

Source: *Electrical Safety Foundation International; CPSC*



**Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.**

## Roanoke Electric FLASHES

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