



## Roanoke Electric **FLASHES**

### **Federal budget will raise electricity rates: A closer look at who would really pay for “Cap and Trade”**

By Curtis Wynn  
*Executive Vice President and CEO*

As a member-owned electric cooperative, Roanoke Electric Cooperative's primary mission is to deliver affordable and reliable power to our members. However, we and other utilities are now experiencing one of the most challenging times in our history to maintain affordability. The cost pressure is primarily due to four key shifts that are driving public policy: global climate change, renewable energy portfolio standards, an anti-coal movement, and a tax on carbon under a “cap-and-trade” system.

A “cap-and-trade” system would set limits (cap) on how much carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases industries can emit. Industries such as electric generation utilities would incur significant additional costs to either reduce emissions or buy allowances for carbon emissions (trade). These cost increases would then be passed on to distribution utilities like the North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation that supplies Roanoke Electric with power.

The March 9, 2009, issue of the Wall Street Journal says, “Politicians love cap and trade because they can claim to be taxing “polluters,” not

workers. However, once the government creates a scarce new commodity — in this case, the right to emit carbon — and then mandates that businesses buy it, the costs would inevitably be passed on to all consumers in the form of higher prices.”

States that receive a lot of electricity from coal generation, like North Carolina where almost 50 percent of power is generated from coal plants, will be hardest hit. While rate impacts for this plan are currently being evaluated, it is estimated members could see an additional retail rate increase of 15-20 percent depending on the price of emission allowances. That percent increase is based on just a carbon cap and trade program. Add to it the cost of climate change legislation and the implementation of a federal renewable energy portfolio standard, and we could all see significant increases in our electric utility bills.

One of the most disturbing points about the proposed cap and trade plan is that most of the money generated from this plan would be used for other government programs and initiatives, budget shortfalls, and tax relief. In other words, this plan will extract significant amounts of money from the South

and Midwest regions of the country and then redistribute that money to other areas for programs that

have nothing to do with climate change or renewable energy.

Now more than ever, we should all be concerned about what rising electricity costs will do to the average family and to additional manufacturing job losses in North Carolina.

Doing the right thing for the environment is important. As a cooperative, we believe doing the right thing for our members' pocketbooks is equally important.

While Roanoke EC supports a long-term effort for our nation to achieve a cleaner environment and to become more energy independent, we also believe we must consider the best interests of our members by balancing the cost to consumers and achieving environmental goals over a longer period of time.



Curtis Wynn

# Poletop rescue exercise: REC linemen, servicemen and foremen make it to the top



Roanoke EC linemen recently completed their annual Pole Top Rescue safety exercise. Each lineman made a mock radio call, suited up in full safety gear, and then climbed the

pole to rescue a 175-pound dummy, nicknamed “Kool.” The rescue must take place in five minutes or less.

“We do this,” said Billy Joe Yates, construction supervisor, “because we want to make sure everyone can quickly rescue a co-worker on the pole if an accident happens.”

Possible problems that can occur on a pole top include electrical burns, heat exhaustion and injury by equipment or tools.

“Often these men are out there in very hot weather, wearing gear that can weigh up to 25 pounds and they’re working around high

voltages,” says Yates. “A lot of things can happen and we’ve got to be ready at all times.”

Yates proudly stated: “These linemen are one of the best teams around, no doubt. I’ve never worked with a more conscientious, dedicated group, and they continue making safety a priority.”

The top five rescue times were: Serviceman Charles Bryant at 2:14, 1st Class Lineman Jason Lassiter at 2:23, Foreman George Cesil at 2:51, 2nd Class Lineman Chad Simmons at 3:02, and Lead Lineman Frank Brennan at 3:17.

## New Choices workforce program honors its first graduate in nursing

New Choices is a workforce development program steering unemployed and underemployed individuals into a healthcare career. The program, a partnership started just over a year ago in Hertford County between Roanoke Electric’s non-profit affiliate, The Roanoke Center, Roanoke-Chowan Hospital, and Roanoke-Chowan Community College, recently celebrated a major milestone.

The program honored its first Associate Degree Nursing graduate and others who have obtained CNA certifications at a banquet to commemorate the achievement. Tawanna Peace was recognized for her graduation this past spring from Roanoke-Chowan Community College’s Associate Degree Nursing Program. Many other “New Choices” participants are either in nursing school or taking nursing assistant courses.

“This is a celebration of hard work and dedication,” said John Rankins, director of human resources at Roanoke-Chowan Hospital. “All of these participants are working hard in school while balancing family and

other responsibilities. They deserve recognition for their dedication to pursuing a healthcare career and a better life for themselves and their families.” Peace was also honored with a special gift for graduating.

Rankins served as ‘Emcee’ for the spring banquet. Funded by Golden LEAF for three years, the program is preparing individuals for successful healthcare careers.

“This program offers hope for those ‘left behind by the economy,’” explained Lisa Newsome, director of community relations at the hospital who wrote the original grant to the Foundation. “We are so proud of every one of the participants who has made a ‘new choice’ to pursue a healthcare career.”

Nettie Evans, vice president for patient care services at RCH encouraged participants saying, “the most important part of your journey is caring—caring for your patients and for other people.” She commended the work the students are doing and inspired them to continue in their career journey.

Shirley White and Diana Mitchell, program coordinators from The



Tawanna Peace

Roanoke Center, assisted by Emily Terry, human resources employment and recruiting specialist at RCH, led networking activities and recognized participants.

The New Choices program is accepting applications for new participants interested in a healthcare career. The program offers tuition assistance and full scholarships for eligible students interested in nursing, radiology, respiratory therapy, physical therapy assistant, medical laboratory technician, or EMS (emergency medical services). Child care and transportation assistance are also available, based on need. To find out more about New Choices or to apply, call The Roanoke Center at (252) 539-4601 or 539-4602.

# Leave space around “big green box”

They're big. They're often green. They generally sit on concrete, often within housing developments. Some folks don't like these “electrical boxes” (a common nickname for pad-mount transformers) and try to hide them with bushes, fences, or flower beds. But stay clear: even small additions around pad-mount transformers create hazards.

To improve aesthetics of new neighborhoods, developers often put in underground power lines. While this eliminates utility poles and overhead wires, it requires installing pad-mounted transformers in some front yards. Unfortunately some homeowners, concerned about curb appeal, attempt to screen pad-mount transformers from view—creating an unsafe situation for all concerned, including Roanoke Electric lineworkers.

Roanoke Electric recommends leaving at least 10 feet of clear space in front of pad-mount transformers. Linemen repair units while they are energized so homeowners don't experience an interruption in service. To ensure safety, they use an 8-foot fiberglass hot stick that requires about 10 feet of “elbow room” in front of the access panel. In some cases, consumers may leave plenty of space in front of the transformer, but grow vegetation on the other three sides.

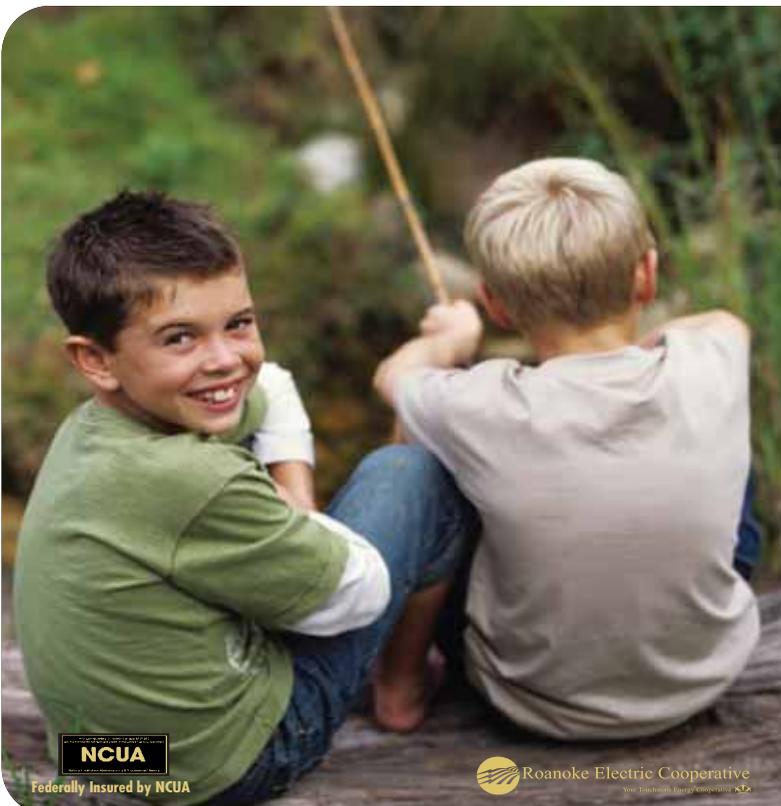
This invites other problems. For example, plant roots can interfere with its operation. Overheating is another big concern that can cause service interruptions when air circulation is compromised.



Pad-mounted transformers surrounded by vegetation or a structure may overheat and cause service interruptions when the air circulation around them is compromised. Allow at least three to four feet of space on both sides and behind the transformer.

Leave transformers alone and please adhere to these tips:

- ❑ Never enclose a pad-mount transformer with fencing, shrubs, or anything else with less than a 10-foot-wide gate or opening.
- ❑ Never allow children to play near pad-mount transformers.
- ❑ Never pour waste oils, chemicals, or other liquids on or near a pad-mount transformer. These liquids can seep into the ground and damage underground cables.



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# Roanoke EC members provide coins for a cause

Through its Operation RoundUp program, Roanoke EC awarded grants totaling \$5,750 to eight area non-profit organizations for the third quarter of 2010. They were:

Conway-Severn Rescue Squad, Inc. (CSRS)  
Conway, \$500

Jackson Rescue Squad, Inc.  
Jackson, \$1,000

Josh Lane Golf Classic/Juvenile Diabetes Research  
Foundation  
Murfreesboro, \$500

Northampton County Department of Extension  
Jackson, \$500

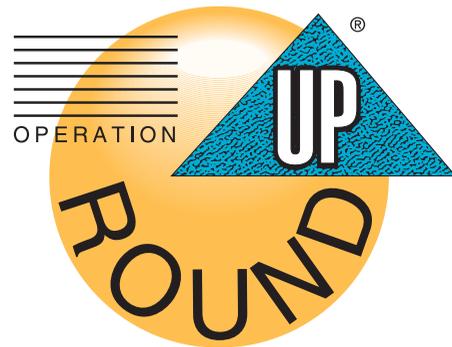
Sunbury Volunteer Fire Department, Inc.  
Sunbury, \$1,500

VFW Post 7312, Sunbury, NC  
Sunbury, \$500

Woodland Rescue/EMS  
Woodland, \$750

Gaston Volunteer Fire/Rescue  
Gaston, \$500

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 provides educational, charitable, or economic development services.

If your organization is a non-profit organization with a 501©3 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., Friday, October 8.

For more information or to receive an application, visit our website at [www.roanokeelectric.com](http://www.roanokeelectric.com) and click on Your Community.

## Roanoke Electric FLASHES

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## Calling all teachers!

Put your bright ideas to work at [www.ncbrightideas.com](http://www.ncbrightideas.com) and earn money for your educational project. Deadline to apply for teacher grants is Friday, September 10.

For program information, contact Robin Phillips at (252) 209-2259.



## Holiday Closing

The Roanoke Electric Office will be closed on Monday, September 6, in observance of Labor Day.

