

Roanoke Electric **FLASHES**

Let Congress know your concerns about the future of the electric industry

By Curtis Wynn
President and CEO

If you think your voice is not heard in Congress, think again

In October 2009, representatives from Roanoke Electric and other electric cooperatives across the state visited our two U.S. Senators' offices and delivered more than 10,000 message cards from North Carolina electric cooperative members. These were some of the cards that tens of thousands of cooperative consumers across North Carolina filled out last year asking our representatives to help craft reasonable and balanced national climate change and energy policy.

Your voices asked Congress to "Find a Balanced Solution," and any climate change policy must take consumers into account.

Well, your voices were heard—Congress is paying closer attention to the consumer impact.

We wanted our Congressional delegation to know that climate change and energy legislation should be fair and balanced across all industries and regions of the country. We also stressed any reforms must contain safeguards to prevent energy cost spikes and out-of-control electric bills.

Congress is listening. But this is not the time to rest. It's time to get our second wind. We must be ready to send our "consumers

first" message to our representatives when climate change and energy policy are again at the forefront of Congressional debate.

Last year, the U.S. House of Representatives passed legislation to reduce greenhouse gases and shift the way America produces and uses energy. At that time, electric cooperative leadership met with our entire congressional delegation. We told them to expect to hear the consumers' viewpoint. As of the end of March, more than 62,000 North Carolina co-op members sent more than 387,000 messages to Congress on these issues.

I would like to thank everyone who participated in the "Our Energy, Our Future" campaign and contacted legislators through our "Find a Balanced Solution" phone number. Having seen firsthand the impact of these communications on our elected leaders, I want to challenge all co-op consumers to remain engaged in our communications efforts. The next several months are critical.

Now the Senate is negotiating legislation which aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, require more efficient use of energy, expedite the development of renewable energy resources, and reduce our dependence on foreign energy.

With your support, we expect to help Congress identify achievable targets and timelines for an affordable, achievable national energy policy that will:



Curtis Wynn

- ❑ Protect average American consumers against unreasonable rate hikes.
- ❑ Consider geographic differences. Some areas have grown faster than others and face different energy challenges.
- ❑ Maintain a diverse energy supply, including emissions-free nuclear power; low-cost, domestic coal using clean coal technologies; geothermal, wind, solar and biomass.
- ❑ Recognize that energy efficiency programs are very important. The lowest cost energy is energy we don't use.
- ❑ Provide access to least-cost financing for new generation and transmission facilities.

For more information, please visit the Find a Balanced Solution's web site at www.findabalancedsolution.com. Thanks for all your support. The energy bill you save may be your own.

Energy Star tax-free weekend is November 5-7

Have you been putting off buying that appliance that you have needed all year? Energy Star Tax Free Weekend is this month, to encourage you to buy appliances and household items that are energy efficient.

The Energy Star Tax-Free Weekend will be held this year from Friday, November 5, through Sunday, November 7. A state law was passed in 2008 that allows Energy Star-qualified products to be exempt from sales and use tax when purchased between 12:01 am on the first Friday in November through the following Sunday.

Qualified products include clothes washers, freezers and refrigerators, central air conditioners and room air conditioners, air-source heat pumps and geothermal heat pumps, ceiling

fans, dehumidifiers and programmable thermostats

Roanoke Electric encourages members to utilize this tax holiday to save money, save energy and protect the environment. Many Energy star qualified appliances use 30 percent less energy than conventional models without sacrificing features, style or comfort.

NOTE: The Energy Star specification for programmable thermostats was suspended on December 31, 2009. Check with retailers to determine if their existing stock of Energy Star-labeled programmable thermostats (manufactured prior to 12/31/09) offered for sale are still eligible for the exemption.



For more information about the tax holiday, visit:

www.dsireusa.org or
www.dornc.com

Roanoke Electric is "Going Green"

Roanoke Electric Cooperative's effort to "Go Green" is designed to help our members save energy, which saves money and preserves our environment.

On August 20, 2007, North Carolina became the first state in the Southeast to sign into law the North Carolina Energy Legislation (SB3). The law promotes the development of renewable energy and energy efficiency through the implementation of a Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Portfolio Standard (REPS).

REC is working with its statewide organization, GreenCo LLC, to meet these mandates through renewable energy investments and energy efficiency. As we move into this Green world, we have a responsibility to ensure that costs associated with meeting legislative mandates are not too overbearing for you as an end consumer. Please stay tuned to the Our Energy, Our Future and Find a Balanced Solution campaigns to

stay connected to the issue.

To find out ways to be more green with REC, please visit www.roanokeelectric.com/gogreen. Here you can learn about renewable energy, ways that you can contribute toward using this source of energy, and REC incentives available to producers of this source.

You'll also find very useful information on saving energy via Roanoke Electric's Together We Save initiative. This program has links to two very interactive web sites—www.togetherwesave.com and Roanoke Electric's Home Energy Suite. TogetherWeSave.com is a gateway through which you can easily learn what to do and the immediate cost-savings impact of those actions. You can teach other co-op members nationwide about your energy saving efforts by Sharing Your Story, and learn from others as they share theirs.

The Home Energy Suite is your online energy evaluation of past

usage. You'll be able to view billing data for the past 12 months and compare that information to the average usage for the same size home relative to the weather data. Also, the bill comparison feature allows you to compare one billing period to another with reasons why there would be differences between the two.

Our Together We Save initiative also offers REC incentives on home improvements, including rebates, low interest loans, potential grants for low income households, etc.

Finally, you can also "Go Green" with Roanoke Electric by using many of the cooperative's account services that reduce the need for paper. Learn about the cooperative's GreenPay and GreenBill programs that allow you to contribute to a greener world.

Please join us in this effort to save you money and leave the world a better place!

Move Over Law protects electric utility employees

In July, North Carolina lawmakers expanded the state's Move Over Law to include electric utility vehicles restoring power on the sides of roadways.

The Move Over Law requires motorists to slow down and cautiously approach emergency vehicles with flashing lights, moving over one lane when possible. Beginning in December, the law will encompass electric utility vehicles that are stopped, with amber lights flashing, on roadway shoulders.

The expanded law protects electric utility workers as they work to maintain power lines or restore power in local communities and along North Carolina's highways.

"Cooperative line crews work in difficult situations and weather

conditions to make sure we all receive safe and reliable power," said Marshall

Cherry, Vice President of Member Services and Marketing for Roanoke EC.

Strong storms like some that moved through our state this year can send trees and limbs crashing to the ground, bringing power lines with them. Although the law does not take effect until December 1, residents are encouraged to begin the practice of moving over and slowing down if they see an electric utility vehicle. This will help protect the safety of not only the workers, but also the drivers.

The bill was signed into law by Governor Bev Perdue on July 21,

**MOVE
OVER**

Slow Down
when you see stopped
electric utility vehicles
It's the Law!

2010. The bill's primary sponsor was State Representative Nelson Cole of Rockingham County. Violating the law can lead to a \$500 fine when the law takes effect.

As always, Roanoke Electric Cooperative strives to provide its members with safe, reliable and affordable electricity, while enhancing the quality of life in the diverse communities we serve.



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Keep Scrooge at bay this holiday season



Follow these steps to make sure the holidays don't leave a surprise gift on your next electric bill?

LED lighting

One of the most popular ways to save energy without dimming holiday cheer is switching to light-emitting diode (LED) holiday lights. These long-lasting and energy efficient lights have been used for years in vehicles to let you know when you're low on gas or need an oil change.

Over the past few years, prices have dropped low enough to make these bulbs cost-effective for decorative use. On the plus side, LEDs last longer than traditional incandescent lights. They run cool and colors don't fade over time. Best of all, they use about a tenth of the energy for the same amount of light.

The news isn't all cheery. Decorative LEDs cost much more than strands of typical lights—up to \$40 or more to outfit a tree, according to Consumer Reports, an independent product tester. But over time, the higher investment pays off. When Consumer Reports compared LEDs and incandescent holiday lights in 2007, they found LEDs use between 1 and 3 kWh of energy, compared to between 12 to 105 kWh for traditional lights. This translates into a savings of up to \$11 every year. Because LEDs are more durable, lasting more than 4,000 hours while incandescent bulbs burn out by the 2,000 hour mark, the initial investment pays dividends over the long haul.

Lights off at bedtime

Whether or not you fork out extra bucks to switch to LEDs, it's a good idea to turn off your holiday lights

before you go to bed. Consider installing timers to reduce the amount of time your holiday lights are on. Just 10 incandescent strands lit for 13 hours a day can easily add more than \$50 to an electric bill. Limit light displays to no more than six hours nightly.

Guests affect usage

Family guests add to your costs, too. Because everyone wants to stay toasty during colder holiday months, heating usually accounts for the lion's share of cold weather energy costs. Extra guests translate into extra water to heat for showers.

Make sure to set your thermostat as low as comfort permits. Each degree above 68 degrees adds 2 percent to 3 percent to the amount of energy needed to heat your home. Conversely, you'll save by lowering your thermostat (and leaving it there).

You can expect extra guests to strain your electric water heater—folks often take longer showers in colder weather, increasing water heating costs. Before guests arrive consider installing a lowflow showerhead to reduce the amount of water used, and try to keep showers to six minutes or less.

Finally, in the average home, 75 percent of the electricity used to power electronic gifts and gadgets is used while the products are off. This phantom power use can be avoided by unplugging the items or using a power strip.

To learn more about ways to cut home energy use, visit www.roanokeelectric.com/togetherwesave.
Sources: Consumer Reports, U.S. Department of Energy

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P.O. Drawer 1326,

Ahoskie, NC 27910

Office: (252) 209-2236

or 1-800-433-2236

For outages call: 1-800-358-9437

For electronic bill payment:

www.roanokeelectric.com

We accept VISA, MasterCard

& E-check.

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Visit our web site at:

www.roanokeelectric.com

Change batteries as well as clocks

Daylight Saving Time (DST) ends at 2 a.m. on Sunday, November 7. Don't forget to turn your clocks back. The National Fire Protection Association and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission recommend changing the battery in your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors when changing clocks for Daylight Savings Time.



Offices closed for Thanksgiving

Roanoke EC offices will be closed on Thursday, November 25, and Friday, November 26, in celebration of the Thanksgiving holiday. For emergencies, call (800) 358-9437.

