Pitt and Greene
Electric Membership Corporation
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Where customers have a choice

NEEDS TO BE LICENSED

Factors that impact your electric bill 16

What to do if your car crashes into a utility pole 18

A MESSAGE FOR YOU

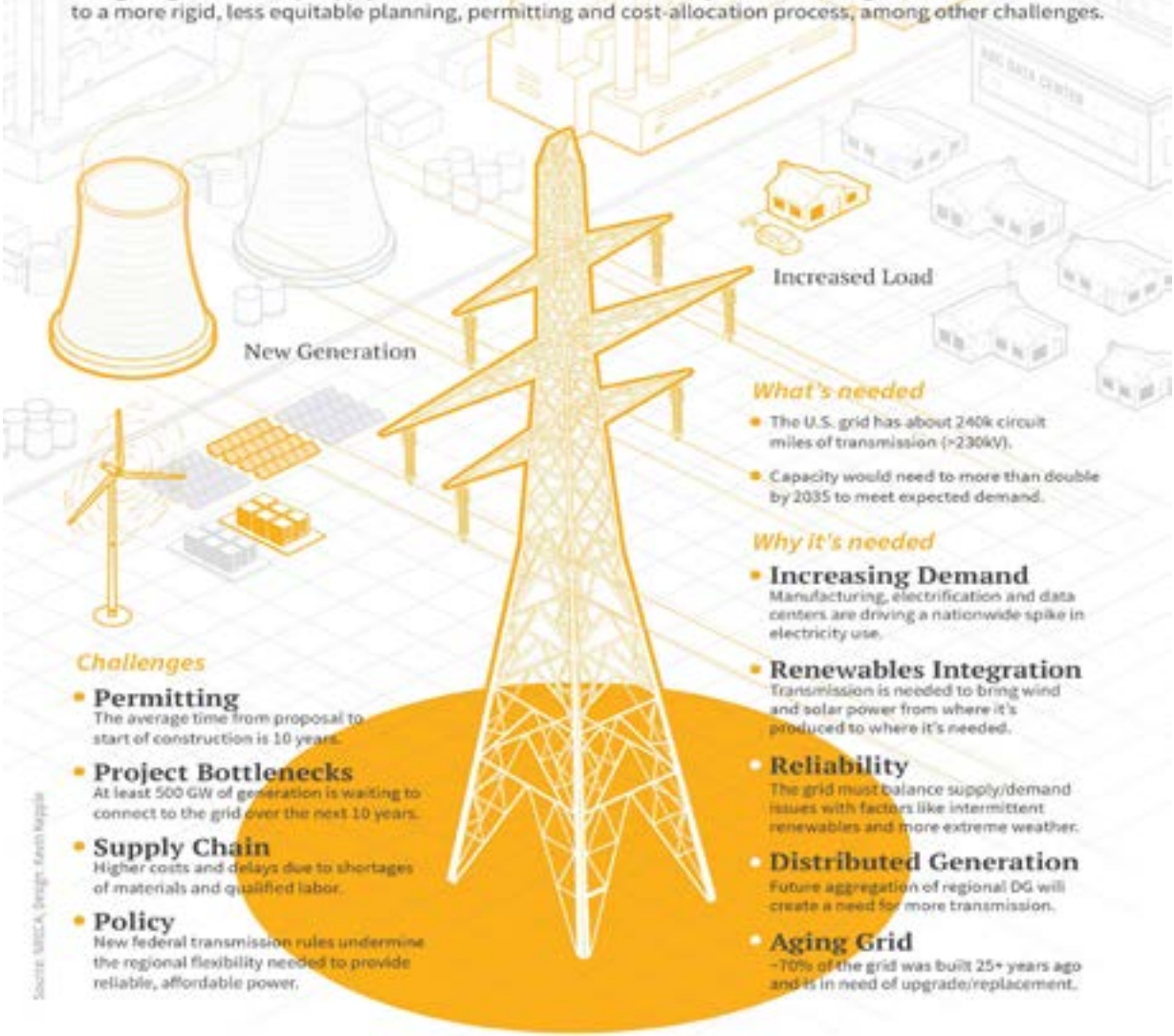
Mark A. Suggs
EVP and General Manager

In past managers messages I have shared the many changes that are affecting the utility industry. Our national organization, NRECA, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, has released a series of graphs to help understand what is taking place. Below is the next one in the series and we will share these with you monthly.

Power Transmission

Fourth in a series

Most experts agree that the U.S. grid will need thousands of miles of new and upgraded transmission in order to meet skyrocketing electricity demand and connect new generation sources while ensuring that power remains reliable and affordable. The ability to site and build this critical infrastructure, however, is being weighed down by supply chain bottlenecks and clouded by new federal regulations that could lead to a more rigid, less equitable planning, permitting and cost-allocation process, among other challenges.



NEEDS TO BE LICENSED

Understanding Factors That Impact Your Power Bill

February brings some of the coldest weather of the year, and as our home heating systems work harder and longer to keep us warm, we typically see higher energy bills.

There are a few key factors that affect electricity prices, as well as a few ways you can make a meaningful impact on home energy savings.

When you receive your monthly bill, you're provided with a summary of how much electricity you used during the billing cycle. You can even see how electricity use may have spiked on days when you used more electricity, such as a particularly chilly day or when relatives were staying with you.

But you might be surprised to learn that beyond your monthly energy consumption, there are external factors that can impact the cost of electricity.

Fuel Prices

Pitt & Greene EMC purchases electricity from our power generation partner, North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation (NCEMC), at a wholesale cost, then we deliver that power to our local communities. The cost of generating and transmitting electricity from our generation partner accounts for a significant portion of the cost to provide electric service to local homes and businesses. The cost of fuels that are used to generate that electricity, such as natural gas and coal, fluctuate based on supply and demand. While these fluctuations can impact the cost of electricity, we work closely with NCEMC to plan ahead and help stabilize electricity prices for our members.

Extreme Weather

While we can't control the weather, we can review weather patterns and forecasts to prepare for times of extreme cold or heat, when we know the demand for electricity will increase. But when temperatures become extremely cold or extremely hot and the demand for electricity spikes, the price of electricity can also increase.

Infrastructure and Equipment

To cover the costs associated with providing electricity to your home or business, members pay a monthly service charge. This flat monthly fee ensures the cost of equipment, materials, labor and daily operations are covered for all members in our service territory. To ensure the reliable service you expect and deserve, we must maintain the local grid, including power lines, substations and other essential equipment.

Energy Policy and Regulations

Federal energy policies and regulations can have a profound impact on electricity costs. As energy generation shifts to the use of more renewable sources and stricter regulations for traditional, always-available fuel sources, such as natural gas and coal plants, costly upgrades and technologies must be constructed and deployed. These additional costs are ultimately passed to consumers.

U.S. power consumption is expected to double by 2050. Across the country, electric cooperatives are working with members of Congress to advocate for smart energy policies that reliably power our local communities. Also, our national organization, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, NRECA, on behalf of the 900 plus cooperatives in the country, is urging the Trump Administration to take concrete steps to repeal the EPA's power plant rule and bolster the long-term reliability of the nation's grid. You can help by visiting VCP, Voices of Cooperative Power, show your support for continued reliable and affordable power.

You Have Control

While many of these external factors that impact electricity costs are out of our control, we all have the power to manage our energy use at home. The most effective way to lower use is thermostat management. Since heating and cooling account for a major portion of home energy use, adjusting the thermostat to the lowest comfortable setting can help you save energy and money. Remember to service your heating and cooling system annually and replace dirty filters as needed.

Everyone can also reduce energy use by taking advantage of off-peak periods, when the demand for electricity is lower. Reserve energy-intensive chores for off-peak times, such as early in the morning or later in the evening, to save energy. Be sure to seal air leaks around windows, doors and other areas where gaps are possible. This will help your heating and cooling system work less and improve the overall comfort of your home.

Energy Efficiency

TIP OF THE MONTH

Look for opportunities to save energy in your workspace. Use ENERGY STAR®-rated equipment, which consumes up to 50% less energy than standard models. Set equipment like printers and scanners to automatically switch to energy-saver mode when not in use. The equipment will also stay cooler, which will extend its life. Another way to save energy is to use efficient lamps for task lighting. Replace any older bulbs with energy-saving LEDs.

Source: energy.gov

EFFECTIVE WAYS

To Lower Home Energy Use

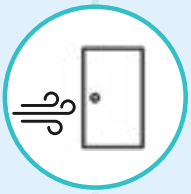
Outside factors, such as fuel and equipment costs and extreme weather, can impact electricity prices. But you have the power to control home energy consumption by taking proactive steps to reduce energy use.

Thermostat Management

The thermostat is one of the best places to lower your energy use because heating and cooling account for a significant portion of home energy consumption. During winter months, adjust your thermostat to the lowest comfortable setting to reduce energy use. The Dept. of Energy recommends 68 degrees or lower.

Utilize Off-Peak Energy Times

Plan energy-intensive chores and tasks, such as running the dishwasher or washing clothing, during off-peak energy hours, when the demand for electricity is lower. Off-peak times are early in the morning or late evenings. By scheduling these activities during off-peak periods, you can help keep rates lower, reduce demand and relieve pressure on the grid.



Seal Your Home

According to ENERGY STAR®, about 20% of heated or cooled air that moves through a home is lost due to lack of proper insulation and air leaks. Ensure your home has sufficient insulation levels and seal air leaks around windows and doors with caulk and weatherstripping. This is a simple, effective way to lower energy use and improve indoor comfort.

Maintain Equipment

The health of your heating and cooling system is essential for comfort and can greatly impact energy bills. Maintain your system by regularly replacing dirty filters and scheduling annual inspections for maintenance and necessary repairs.

Offices Closed

The offices of Pitt & Greene EMC will be closed Monday, Feb. 17, in observance of President's Day.

TIPS TO AVOID ENERGY SCAMS

Scammers will try anything to deceive utility customers, including a tactic that claims customers have overpaid their bill. If you receive a call, text or email from someone claiming you overpaid a utility bill and need to provide your banking or credit card information to receive a credit, it's likely a scam. In most cases, your utility will apply a credit to your account to cover future charges

Source: Utilities United Against Scams

Congratulations to the following employees and directors who were recently recognized for their years of service:

- **5 years:** Brittain Thomas, Austin Dixon
- **10 years:** Candice Gibson
- **20 years:** Director Glenn Smith
- **25 years:** Patsy Rowe
- **30 years:** Bobby Keel, Mickey Grant, Tammy Murphy and Director Jack Edmondson
- **35 years:** Tony Barrow, Tim Rouse

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Co-op Office Hours
Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–5 p.m.
252-753-3128 | 1-800-622-1362 | 252-747-7600

POWER OUTAGES & EMERGENCIES
During weekends, holidays and after office hours: 252-753-8778

De lunes a viernes de 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
252-753-3128 | 1-800-622-1362 | 252-747-7600

CORTES DE SUMINISTRO ELÉCTRICO Y EMERGENCIAS:
Durante fines de semana, días festivos y después del horario de oficina: 252-753-8778

WHAT TO DO: IF YOUR CAR CRASHES INTO A UTILITY POLE

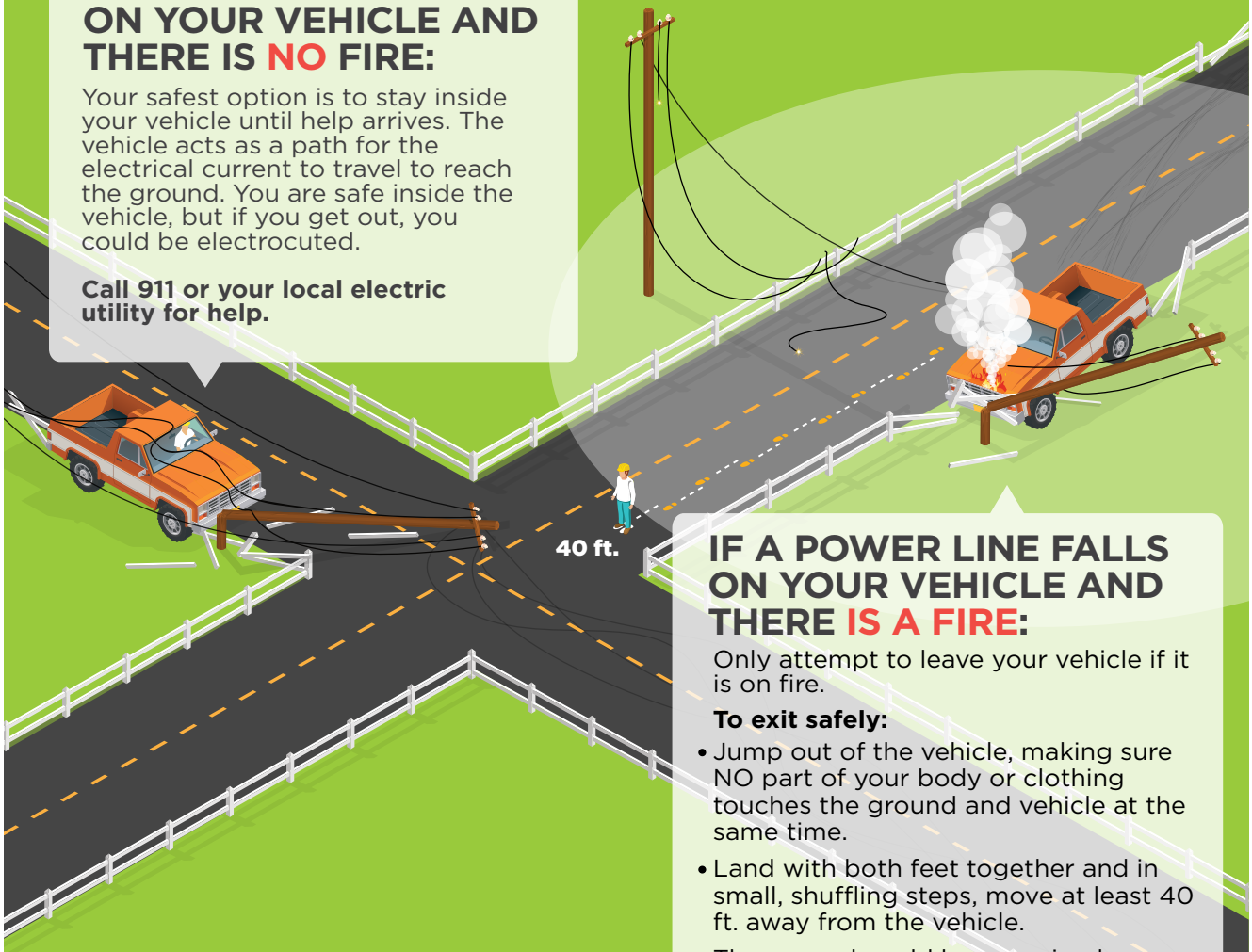
Accidents happen. Would you know what to do if your car crashed into an electric utility pole? Knowing what to do could be the difference between life and death.

Always consider power lines and other electrical equipment to be live and dangerous!

IF A POWER LINE FALLS ON YOUR VEHICLE AND THERE IS NO FIRE:

Your safest option is to stay inside your vehicle until help arrives. The vehicle acts as a path for the electrical current to travel to reach the ground. You are safe inside the vehicle, but if you get out, you could be electrocuted.

Call 911 or your local electric utility for help.



IF A POWER LINE FALLS ON YOUR VEHICLE AND THERE IS A FIRE:

Only attempt to leave your vehicle if it is on fire.

To exit safely:

- Jump out of the vehicle, making sure NO part of your body or clothing touches the ground and vehicle at the same time.
- Land with both feet together and in small, shuffling steps, move at least 40 ft. away from the vehicle.
- The ground could be energized. Shuffling away with both feet together decreases the risk of electrical shock.

Call 911 or your local electric utility for help.

AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES