



Berkeley Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

TO REPORT OUTAGES

Call: 1-888-253-4232

DISTRICT OFFICES

Hours: 8 a.m.–5 p.m.

AWENDAW

North 7200, US-17
Awendaw, SC 29426
(843) 884-7525

AWMemberRequests@bec.coop

GOOSE CREEK

2 Springhall Road
Goose Creek, SC 29445
(843) 553-5020

GCMemberRequests@bec.coop

JOHNS ISLAND

1135 Main Road
Johns Island, SC 29455
(843) 559-2458

JIMemberRequests@bec.coop

MONCKS CORNER

1732 US-52 West
Moncks Corner, SC 29461
(843) 761-8200/825-3383

MCMemberRequests@bec.coop

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- Robert Vandross, *District 1*
- Sheila Powell, *District 2*
- Wayne DeWitt, *District 3*
- Sam Gourline, *District 4*
- District 5 - Vacancy*
- Willis Sanders, *District 6*
- Connie P. Shuler, *District 7*
- Harry A. Brunson, *District 8*
- Henry H. Chavis, Sr., *District 9*

PRESIDENT & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Mike Fuller

CONNECT WITH US ON SOCIAL:

- @BerkeleyElectricCooperative
- @BerkeleyElectr3
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Members serving members



MIKE FULLER
President & CEO

Electric cooperatives play a crucial role in powering communities across the state, ensuring reliable and affordable electricity for their members. Cooperatives are unique in their governance structure, with board members elected from within their membership. While many members may not consider running for a position on the board, it is essential to recognize the importance of active member participation. It's the job of our board members to make informed decisions on long-term priorities and investments that will keep the cooperative running smoothly. Although our Annual Meeting is a long way off in November, we are already looking for talented and engaged members who are willing to put their skills to work on behalf of their friends and neighbors.

A cooperative runs on democratic principles, where the board acts as the representative voice of the members. By running for a board position, members have the opportunity to shape the direction of the cooperative, ensuring decisions are made with the best interests of the community they serve. Board members also act as advocates for the community, making decisions that prioritize reliability, affordability, and sustainability. By joining the board, members can ensure that their concerns and unique needs are heard and addressed.

One of the main ways the board of trustees accomplishes this is by recognizing that transparency and accountability are essential in any cooperative. Board members are entrusted with upholding these principles by maintaining open lines of communication, ensuring financial integrity, and making decisions in a fair and unbiased manner. Running for the board allows members to actively contribute to creating a cooperative trust that exists between the board, management, and the membership.

While day-to-day decisions are made by co-op staff, major decisions are made by the board, whose mission is to look out for the vitality of the co-op and the community it serves. Our board meets on a regular basis, and we offer specialized training opportunities to help board members make informed decisions such as the Credentialed Cooperative Director (CCD) program.

Although our job as a cooperative is to supply power, the real power rests with the membership, and by stepping forward to serve on the board, members can make a significant impact on their cooperative's success. Our board elections will be held in November, and we will continue to keep you informed about important dates through the magazine and our social media channels. We love our community and want to help it thrive. If you share the same commitment and want to contribute in a tangible way, I hope you'll consider running for a board position.

Sincerely,

DATES TO REMEMBER:



DEADLINE FOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE CANDIDATES
- districts 1, 4 & 7



DEADLINE FOR PETITION CANDIDATES
- requires 50 signatures



ANNUAL MEETING OF MEMBERS
- must vote in person



Social Security is more than just a number

On the go this summer? Social Security is there for you when you travel, whether you're in the United States or in another country. Their online services page at www.ssa.gov/online-services provide you with a wide variety of self-service options you can use on your cell phone, tablet, or computer.

Through the online services, you can:

- Find out if you qualify for benefits.
- Apply for Social Security retirement, disability, and Medicare benefits.
- Get your Social Security Statement.
- Request a replacement Social Security card.
- Appeal a decision.

Do you receive Social Security benefits or Medicare? If so, you can create or log in to your personal my Social Security account to:

- Get your benefit verification letter.
- Check your information and benefit amount.
- Change your address and telephone number.
- Start or change your direct deposit.
- Get a replacement SSA-1099 or SSA-1042S for tax season.
- Report your wages if you work and receive disability benefits or SSI.
- Create a personal "mySocialSecurity" account today at www.ssa.gov/myaccount to take advantage of these easy-to-use features. Also, please share their online services page with family and friends who need this important information.



MICAH PONCE

"Backroads" calendar contest!

Show us the hidden gems that can only be found along the backroads of South Carolina. Barns, landscapes, roadside attractions...Help us showcase the unique beauty found off the beaten path. And, if your photo is chosen, you **win \$100!**

The contest runs from July 1 thru September 30. All submissions must be landscape orientation (horizontal) and print quality so send us the **highest resolution** image possible. Cell phone shots are accepted but not encouraged. Please e-mail all submissions to micahp@bec.coop with the subject line "Calendar Contest." Be sure to let us know the location of your photo. **You must be a BEC member to enter!**

Summer rate tilt

Living in the Lowcountry, it should come as no surprise that there is usually a greater need for air conditioning compared to heating during the year. This greater demand for electricity, especially in the afternoons, drives up demand, which is reflected in the wholesale price of electricity the co-op purchases from its supplier. This is known as the summer "tilt" and affects rates from June through mid-September. The summer energy charge is currently \$0.1262 per kWh compared to the winter energy charge of \$0.1183 per kWh. Please note that an additional \$0.015 per kWh fuel cost credit will be applied.

BERKELEY AT-A-GLANCE	MARCH 2022	MARCH 2023
Total kWh sold	333,427,725	355,384,592
No. meters served	117,512	122,862
Avg. residential kWh/meter	1,047	929
Avg. residential bill/meter	\$144.21	\$136.08
Miles of line	6128	6257
Avg. daily high temperature	74	73
Avg. daily low temperature	51	51



Let's go to the rodeo!

Our linemen have done it again! This time they took some of the top honors at the 2023 Gaff N' Go Lineman Rodeo held in Virginia. Two journeymen teams and two apprentices competed against groups from across the country and, no surprise here, they brought home some hardware!

Evan Mizzell & Harry Horne represented the co-op in the Apprentice division while the journeymen teams included: William Burbage, Will Mills, and Cody Carter, KJ Rhode, Robbie Harrelson, Britt Pipkin.

The apprentices competed in five events, including CPR and a written apprenticeship test. Out of the 107 apprentices who competed in the rodeo, Horne placed 15th overall. Both Berkeley Electric Journeymen teams had a strong showing across the entire competition testing their skills against 32 teams.

Burbage, Mills, and Carter brought home first place in the Wire Down event, and Rhode, Harrelson, and Pipkin were close behind finishing second with perfect scores. Our teams also finished nearly 20



PHOTOS BY PATRICK GAILEY

Berkeley crews competed against lineworkers from across the country in events like Insulator Changeout

seconds before any other team.

In the Fiberglass Crossarm Change Out, Burbage, Mills, and Carter placed third. Again, Rhode, Harrelson and Pipkin were only 0.7 seconds behind, placing fourth.

"I'm impressed with their finishes with the number of teams that competed," said Patrick Gailey, director of safety and technical training. "To have three guys with less than 10 years combined experience place against guys with over 30-40 years of experience speaks for itself."



BEC linemen Harrelson, Rhodes and Pipkin show off just a few of the awards our teams brought home from Virginia

Haley, energy CEOs discuss future of generation



MEADE AGENCY

A trio of energy CEOs from across the state joined former S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley on Monday at Berkeley Electric Cooperative's Moncks Corner headquarters to discuss the future of power supply and the importance of keeping electricity affordable and reliable for families and businesses.

"Affordable energy is important to not just Berkeley Electric or the state of South Carolina, but really across the country," BEC President and CEO Mike Fuller told Haley. "We have to solve these problems together."

Fuller was joined by Jimmy Staton, president and CEO of Santee Cooper, and Rob Hochstetler, president and CEO of Central Electric Power Cooperative, Inc. They are concerned proposed regulations on power plants will lead to economic hardship for traditional energy sectors and cause higher electric bills for consumers. The new rules would require basically all new and existing power plants to significantly reduce carbon emissions, often necessitating costly technological upgrades and transitions to cleaner energy sources over an accelerated timeline.

Berkeley Electric supports an "all-of-the-above" approach to power supply employing a diverse mix of generation fuels, which includes a reasonable transition period to fully utilize renewables in a cost-effective way. Fuller expressed his frustration that power supply, which is something that should be non-partisan, has become a political issue.

"We have been, for the past 80-plus years, dedicated to

providing safe, reliable and affordable power," Fuller said. "Our members look to us to be an advocate for them...within the legislative process. They look for us to be their voice."

The sustained growth in the state underscores the urgent need to establish new energy sources to meet BEC members' rising energy demands. Yet, the construction of new power plants to address this need has been met with numerous obstacles. As nearly 60% of South Carolina's present energy production relies on fossil fuels, these regulations pose significant risks to the state's current energy supply. This is an urgent concern for Berkeley as meter count and electric load have been (cont.)



CEOs Mike Fuller and Rob Hochstetler explain to Haley how supply chain issues are impacting their ability to deliver reliable and affordable power.

BERKELEY ELECTRIC

growing steadily over the last decade. Each year, the cooperative has added 5,000-7,000 new members and set a new system peak for electric demand last December. Record breaking cold temperatures this winter led to rolling blackouts in parts of the state and highlighted the need for new sources of generation.

“As much as we don’t like being part of the political process, some things are worth fighting for. We have to be the advocate and the voice for our members,” Fuller said.

Supply chain issues and the steep increase in material costs were also a topic of discussion between Haley and the CEOs as delays and price increases are impacting electric utilities’ ability to deliver reliable and affordable power.

Haley, who is running for the Republican presidential nomination, is also a former ambassador to the U.N. She kicked off the event with a 30-minute speech that outlined many of her platform issues, including foreign relations, federal spending and government transparency.

The crowd of about 250 people included the public, BEC employees and trustees, Santee Cooper employees and co-op representatives from across the state. Haley acknowledged the strong working relationship she had with cooperatives while governor.

“We all know we went through our share of crises in South Carolina,” Haley said. “But when we had hurricanes, when we had that thousand-year flood, when we had any of those issues, y’all were incredible partners. You never lost sight that it was about South Carolina families.”



BERKELEY ELECTRIC

Berkeley Electric recently built the Millbranch substation to handle commercial growth in Camp Hall for companies like Volvo and Redwood Materials.



LOGAN PONCE

Former governor and current presidential hopeful, Nikki Haley, took the chance to meet with supporters and outline her positions on energy policy, foreign relations, federal spending and government transparency.



BERKELEY ELECTRIC

Linemen Ashby Freeman (L) and Kyle Childers set underground transformers in Hewing Farms, a new residential development in Carnes Crossroads. Strong residential growth is adding 5,000-7,000 meters to the co-ops system annually.



MICAH PONCE

Students receive \$25,000 in scholarships

Congratulations to the recipients of our 2023 Trust Scholarships! This year, Operation Round Up® was able to provide 10 scholarships to graduating seniors from local high schools. Each student will receive \$2,500 to help them pursue their higher education goals. This year's recipients are pursuing degrees in biology, criminal justice, exercise science and more:

- **Janessa Bell** – Claflin University (Cross HS)
- **Alyssa Boris** – Brevard College (Wando HS)
- **Paige Dombey** – Univ. of South Carolina (James Island Charter HS)
- **Tyriq Hamilton** – Winthrop University (Summerville HS)
- **Micah Houston** – Coastal Carolina University (Stratford HS)
- **Ajani “AJ” Jacobs-El** – Coastal Carolina Univ. (Pinewood Prep)
- **Emilie Jones** – Clemson University (Oceanside Collegiate Academy)
- **Isaiah Mayrant** – University of South Carolina (Timberland HS)
- **Caleb McNeil** – University of South Carolina (Berkeley HS)
- **Kenneth Rivers** – Winthrop University (St. Johns HS)

Be on the lookout for invasive beetle



DAVE COYLE/CLEMSON UNIVERSITY

The Asian Longhorned beetle (ALB) is an invasive, wood-boring pest currently affecting Charleston and Dorchester counties. Adult beetles are 1 to 1 1/2 inches long, shiny black with distinct white spots, and can damage trees and properties. Trees infested with ALB will exhibit signs including round holes, shallow oval-shaped depressions in the bark, oozing sap and sawdust-like material collecting on the trees. If you believe you may have found

ALB or its damage, please take photos and submit a report to the Asian Longhorned Beetle Reporting Tool online or contact StopALB@clemson.edu. For more information, please visit www.clemson.edu/alb or www.AsianLonghornedBeetle.com.

Co-op requires access to meter; property



BERKELEY ELECTRIC

Meters must be accessible to co-op employees and obstructions need to be removed upon request or service may be cut off.

Digital meters provide both members and the cooperative with numerous advantages including the reduced need for co-op employees to enter a member's property. However, this has led to several obstacles preventing our employees and contractors from accessing the meter when work needs to be done. This includes locked gates, free roaming dogs and meters being enclosed inside of trellises, behind decks or inside garages.

Berkeley Electric calls members ahead of time and will send members a certified letter if employees cannot access the meter. Members have 30 days from receipt to contact the co-op and make arrangements or service will be cut off.

Members have a right to secure their property and we try to give advance notice of when we need access but please note it is not required. According to Service Policy 702—cooperative-identified employees, have the right of access to member's premises at all reasonable times to access and maintain the co-op's equipment.

If you have questions, you have the right to request to see the credentials of an employee or contractor if they are not readily visible. If you are still unsure, please call your local district office.