



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

MONCK'S CORNER

1732 US-52 West

Moncks Corner, SC 29461

(843) 761-8200/825-3383

MCMemberRequests@bec.coop

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Going beyond the bill



MIKE FULLER

President & CEO

WHEN IT COMES to your energy provider, we know that you basically only think about us when there is an outage or when you receive your bill. Unfortunately, many members are unaware of the full range of services we have available to help them keep their energy costs under control. As a not-for-profit energy provider, we're not just about delivering power; we're about empowering you with the knowledge and tools to make informed decisions.

One of our most powerful tools is the free Smart Hub app. It lets you track your daily energy consumption, providing real-time insights into your usage patterns. When combined with our prepaid billing option, members have almost instant feedback on how they use energy in their homes and how fluctuations in their bills can be caused by extreme weather. We've designed these tools to make it easier to understand and control your energy management.

But we go beyond just monitoring. Our Home Advantage Program is a testament to our commitment to making energy efficiency accessible. We offer affordable financing for upgrades, including EV chargers, with the goal of your savings offsetting the loan costs. This isn't just about saving money; it's about making your home more comfortable and sustainable. We've seen firsthand how these programs can transform homes and sometimes, even members' lives.

One of the clearest examples of this recently resulted from our Proactive Billing program that continuously monitors billing data and identifies potential issues to be addressed before they become major issues for members. In this case, we contacted a member

because we noticed a significant spike in his usage, most likely related to his HVAC system. It turns out that he was unaware of the scale of the problem but had been struggling to juggle doctor bills, his regular bills and the suddenly higher electric bill. By working cooperatively with his HVAC company, we identified the problem and greatly reduced his daily energy use.

We understand that your home is a significant investment. That's why we have a dedicated energy services team to act as your advocate, ensuring quality work from trusted contractors. We want you to feel confident that you're making sound decisions.

And speaking of confidence, our smart thermostat and water heater programs, like H2O Advantage and H2O Select, provide peace of mind. These programs offer control, warranties, and rebates helping you manage major appliances efficiently.

We're also committed to renewable energy, offering guidance on solar installations, helping members understand the complexities of solar and ensuring they get what they pay for with free solar proposal evaluations.

We know that every home is unique, and that energy usage varies. That's why we're dedicated to providing personalized support and guidance. We use technology to improve our service and to help our members improve their lives.

In fact, we'll soon be releasing a new, personalized energy advisor app. This app will provide customized information and recommendations to help members manage their energy usage.

At Berkeley Electric, we believe in building a partnership with our members. We're not just your electricity provider; we're your energy partner beyond the bill.

Sincerely,

Michael S. Fuller



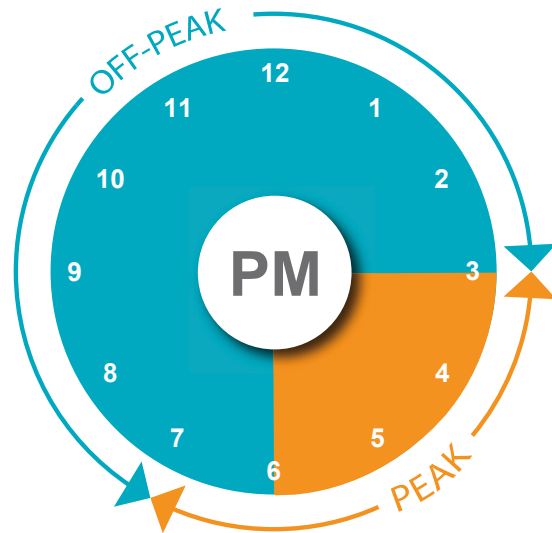
Berkeley Electric is searching for Community Champions who deserve recognition for making a positive impact and benefiting members in our cooperative's Latino communities. Anyone can nominate a Community Champion, but nominees must either be a Berkeley Electric member, live in a residence served by Berkeley Electric, or be making a positive impact in a community served by Berkeley Electric. Past winners have included animal and environmental activists, mentors for youth and single mothers, as well as business leaders advocating for community resources. Visit berkeleyelectric.coop to nominate.



Clean up crew

Commitment to Community is not just an empty phrase at Berkeley Electric Cooperative, which is why a dedicated group of Moncks Corner employees braves the elements four times a year to clean up the stretch of US-Highway 52 in front of the company headquarters. This is part of the co-op's partnership with Keep Berkeley Beautiful, a volunteer organization dedicated to reducing litter, improving recycling, and beautifying communities. Berkeley Electric has also participated in beautification projects like spreading mulch in roadside flower gardens.

CHECK THE HOUR BEFORE USING POWER



Berkeley Electric's Time-of-Day rate (TOD) is a voluntary program that rewards members with a lower electric rate for shifting energy-intensive tasks - such as laundry, cooking and heating/cooling - away from peak hours. Summer peak hours are from **3 p.m. to 6 p.m.** and are in effect from **April-October**. These are the few hours each day where demand for electricity is the highest and most expensive.

The more you can shift energy use away from the peak time, the more you save, but it requires an active change in habits to achieve maximum savings. Members can learn more about the Time-of-Day rate by contacting the Energy Services Department through Smarthub. Our experienced energy experts will provide an individualized action plan on how you can lower your energy costs.

BASE RATE: 7.88¢ per kWh*

PEAK RATE: \$11.25 x maximum kWh used during peak hours*

*rates reflect a zero power cost adjuster & do not apply to members on regular residential rate (12.62¢)



Wayne Dewitt
Chairman, District 3

Lineworkers are wired for service

Every day we flip the switch, and the lights come on. But how often do we stop to recognize all the work necessary to make that simple act a reality? Honestly, I probably don't even do it as often as I should, but luckily, we all will have the chance on National Lineworker Appreciation Day this month.

Lineworkers are more than just technicians; they are first responders, problem solvers and community pillars. Often working in challenging conditions, they brave extreme weather, climb towering poles, and work with high-voltage lines, often in the dead of night, to restore power after storms or outages. Their work is physically demanding, mentally taxing, and inherently dangerous. Yet, they approach each task with a commitment to serving their communities.

Think about the last time your power went out. The inconvenience, the disruption, the feeling of helplessness. Now, imagine the individuals who worked tirelessly to restore that power, battling wind, rain, or sometimes even snow, often leaving their own families to ensure yours are safe and comfortable. That's the reality for lineworkers.

Their expertise doesn't come easily. Lineworkers train for years to handle complex electrical systems, diagnose problems quickly, and implement solutions safely and efficiently. Their knowledge extends beyond just fixing downed lines; they are responsible for maintaining and upgrading our infrastructure, ensuring its reliability and longevity. It's a career that requires constant training and awareness.

Beyond their technical skills, lineworkers embody a spirit of camaraderie and mutual support. This is



particularly evident in the cooperative model, where lineworkers often travel across state lines to provide mutual aid during major outages.

Berkeley Electric's lineworkers are no exception. They consistently demonstrate their commitment to service, both locally and beyond. If you follow us on social media, you have seen where our lineworkers have provided vital mutual aid to several cooperatives during the winter storm season both locally and out-of-state. These crews worked long hours, often in difficult terrain and on unfamiliar systems, to help restore power to thousands of fellow co-op members.

This mutual aid is a cornerstone of the cooperative spirit. It highlights the willingness of lineworkers to go above and beyond, to extend a helping hand to those in need. It's a powerful reminder that we are all part of a larger community, connected by a shared commitment to service.

On National Lineworker Appreciation Day, we encourage you to take a moment to express your gratitude to these essential workers. A simple thank you, a wave, or a social media post can go a long way in showing your appreciation for their hard work and dedication.

Let's also remember the families of lineworkers. They make sacrifices too, enduring long hours and missed holidays, knowing their loved ones are working to keep our communities safe. Their support is essential to the work lineworkers do.

Sincerely,

BERKELEY AT-A-GLANCE	DECEMBER 2023	DECEMBER 2024
Total kWh sold	407,506,526	437,554,392
No. meters served	126,320	133,248
Avg. residential kWh/meter	1,208	1,285
Avg. residential bill/meter	\$166.51	\$184.43
Miles of line	6367	6501
Avg. daily high temperature	65	62
Avg. daily low temperature	44	46

BEC staying head of growth in Johns Island district

BY JOSH P. CROTZER

WHILE MOST are still hitting their snooze button or waiting for the shower to heat up, Berkeley Electric linemen working in the Johns Island District have already arrived at their district office.

About six years ago, the co-op's line crews transitioned to a 6 a.m. to 3 p.m. shift—an adjustment that has become essential in a community where the population doubled to 28,000 between 2010 and 2020.

"Coming in at 6 a.m. helps tremendously," says crew foreman Kyle Dahlman. "Traffic backs up to our office with drivers heading off the island to Kiawah and Seabrook, where they work. It's the same in the afternoon. We've had to adjust and deal with it."

Kiawah Island and Seabrook Island, known for their private beaches, golf courses and celebrity homeowners, are also a part of Berkeley Electric's Johns Island District, along with Wadmalaw



Berkeley Electric's overhead lines stand among the marsh near the Stono River. These lines are slated to be converted to steel poles to improve reliability for this booming community.

PHOTOS BY JOSH P. CROTZER

Island and Ravenel on the mainland.

Traffic jams were not something Dahlman had to worry about while he was growing up on the island. Back then, he could hop in his Ford Ranger and cruise the unpaved roads of what was then a quiet farming community. But over the past decade, proximity to Charleston—one of the nation's most culturally rich and sought-after cities—has fueled rapid residential and commercial development on the East Coast's fourth-largest island.

"This used to be rural, grassroots—everybody knew everybody," says Scott Bennett, Berkeley Electric's superintendent for the district. "If you mention Johns Island to anyone in the area, the first thing that is going to come to their mind is the explosive growth."

Avoiding morning rush hour is critical, given the increasing demand for new service installations. Bennett says the district is averaging 80 new meters per month, bringing the total to approximately 27,000—more than what some South Carolina electric co-ops serve across their entire system.

"As the power provider, we're wide open trying to keep up and creating the infrastructure that's needed," says Bennett. "But we can't lose sight of the fact that we have existing infrastructure. That needs attention and it's critical that we make time for that."

To meet these demands, the district employs four construction crews and a

two-man service crew, supported by a planning department and system-wide crews based at the Moncks Corner headquarters. Many of the linemen are native to the area.

"They know the roads, they are familiar with the people, and they live close," says Bennett. "When they are on call, the response time is as low as possible."

For large construction projects, Berkeley Electric receives additional support from Sumter Utilities' contract crews and Pinnacle Construction for underground boring. Currently, the district's power lines are evenly split between overhead and underground, but that's changing fast.

"Almost all new services are underground and installed in conduit buried in the ground," says Bennett. "That's been one of our most advantageous moves. We just pull the cable into the conduit, and for all practical purposes, we never have to dig there again. It saves us a tremendous amount of time if the cable ever needs replacing."

Keeping up with installing the new services and maintaining the existing ones aren't Berkeley Electric's only priorities.

"We're still a co-op, and we recognize our business model of being owned by the members. So we maintain that small-town interaction with them," says Bennett. "The dynamics of this growth and the influx of new folks can be challenging, but that is still at the forefront of our intent."



Berkeley Electric Journeyman Lineman Evan Sparks repairs a pole that had been hit by a car, a frequent occurrence on Johns Island with its increased traffic density.



PHOTOS BY JOSH P. CROTZER

Berkeley Electric Member Service Representative Tania Rhodes (left) tells Miriam Joyner about some the energy-saving programs the co-op offers during Joyner's visit to the Johns Island District office.

Member satisfaction is job satisfaction

That commitment extends to the member services team, led by Office Manager Tanisha Ming-Lafayette. Her staff has grown to five representatives, including two Spanish speakers, to better serve the community's evolving needs.

Ming-Lafayette has found that many of the district's new residents are first-time co-op members.

"A lot of them come from northern states and aren't used to the co-op model," says Ming-Lafayette, a James Island native. "They're pleasantly surprised by how friendly we are. We try to show them that we care and want to help lower their electricity use."

Berkeley Electric offers various energy services, including energy audits and rebates for smart thermostats, electric water heaters and dual-fuel heating systems. Members can also access financing for energy-efficient upgrades through the Home Advantage and Energy Advance Loan programs.

Sometimes members just need the help of one of Berkeley Electric's energy experts.

"A member knew one of his two HVAC units needed repair but wasn't sure which one," says Ming-Lafayette. "One of our technicians identified the unit based on power usage, saving him from paying the HVAC company a service fee for both."

The district's office, which opened at its current location at 1135 Main Road in 2020, also offers a welcoming space for members to pay bills and seek advice.

"I like coming here because everyone is so nice," says Miriam Joyner, a resident of Johns Island and a Berkeley Electric member. "They tell me how to monitor my bill and what to put my thermostat on."

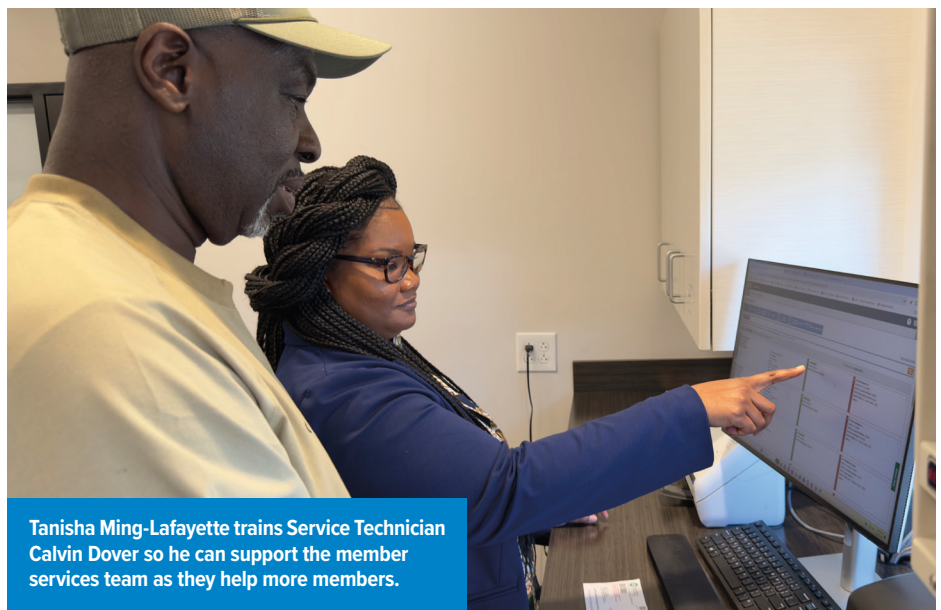
For Ming-Lafayette, that kind of member satisfaction is job satisfaction.

"What I like most about my job is being able to provide help and assistance," she says. "Whether it's helping members

better understand their use of electricity or helping my team members with the resources they need to do the same."

As Johns Island continues to grow, Berkeley Electric remains committed to balancing expansion with the personal, community-centered service that has always defined the co-op.

Traffic on Johns Island may be a daily challenge, but Berkeley Electric is making sure electricity isn't. By staying ahead of growth, investing in infrastructure and maintaining strong connections with its members, the co-op is keeping the lights on and the power flowing.



Tanisha Ming-Lafayette trains Service Technician Calvin Dover so he can support the member services team as they help more members.

Brotherhood on the line

Mutual aid and the co-op spirit

IN THE FACE of natural disasters and unforeseen emergencies, the strength of a community is often measured by its ability to come together and support one another. For electric cooperatives, this principle of mutual aid is not just a concept; it's a way of life and a testament to the power of cooperation among cooperatives.

The concept of mutual aid is deeply rooted in the seven cooperative principles, a framework that guides the operations of electric cooperatives nationwide. As Tommy Harvey, vice president of operations, explains, "When it comes to cooperation between and among cooperatives, it's never more important than during storms when communities are left vulnerable and in need of immediate assistance."

The exchange of resources and personnel between cooperatives is a powerful demonstration of this principle. When a storm hits, crews from neighboring or even distant co-ops mobilize, leaving their communities to help restore power to those in need. Ashby Freeman, a line foreman, highlights the emotional impact of this support: "Whenever our system is down here, it's a sight for sore eyes when you see the convoy of help roll in."

Mutual aid is not simply about sending equipment and manpower; it's about fostering a sense of solidarity and shared purpose. As Harvey notes, "Every truck you see go by has a guy or lady or two in it that is leaving somebody's back home." This sacrifice, this willingness to put the needs of others before one's own, is the essence of cooperative spirit.

The standardized construction standards across cooperatives play a crucial role in facilitating mutual aid. These standards ensure that crews from different co-ops can seamlessly integrate with the affected system, minimizing delays and maximizing efficiency. "Our spec build pretty well mirrors most



BEC crews assist Southside Electric Cooperative in Virginia after Winter Storm Blair left over 14,000 members without power.

everywhere we can go there," Freeman states, emphasizing the uniformity that enables rapid response.

The coordination of mutual aid efforts is a complex undertaking, requiring meticulous planning and communication. As Harvey describes, "This is orchestrated chaos that involves gathering information, assessing damage, and deploying resources strategically. The goal is to restore power as quickly and safely as possible while also ensuring the well-being of the crews involved," he says.

The impact of mutual aid extends beyond the restoration of power. It strengthens the bonds between cooperatives, fostering a sense of unity and shared purpose. It also reinforces the cooperative's commitment to serving its members, not just during normal operations but also during times of crisis.

The experiences of lineworkers during major events, such as Hurricane Sandy or Katrina, highlight the challenges and rewards of mutual aid. The long hours, the hazardous conditions, and the emotional toll of witnessing widespread devastation are all part of the job. Yet, these experiences also underscore the importance of their work and the power of collective action.

"It's a gut punch to see that level of devastation and people hurting," Harvey reflects on the aftermath of Katrina.

Mutual aid is a testament to the enduring power of cooperation and the strength of the cooperative model. It's a reminder that we are all part of a larger community, connected by a shared commitment to serving others.



Berkeley crews spent weeks in punishing conditions while aiding restoration efforts in the wake of Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Katrina was one of the costliest and deadliest hurricanes in U.S. history.