

# Lumbee River

*Electric Membership Corporation*

 DECEMBER 2008 MEMBER NEWSLETTER

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



## Rising Power Costs Among Factors in Recent Rate Increase

**O**n November 1, Lumbee River EMC implemented our first rate adjustment since May 2006. We value you as a member and place a strong emphasis on providing you with exceptional service. To maintain the quality, reliability and integrity of the services we provide, it is necessary for us to adjust our pricing structure.

While virtually all aspects of today's cost of living continue to rise, we pride ourselves on avoiding routine price adjustments. We only consider an adjustment when we really have to. We

believe that reliable electric service at a reasonable price is something that you can count on and that we deliver on a daily basis.

This 7.91% increase is based on numerous factors, the largest of which is purchased power. To meet your electric needs, we join together with other electric cooperatives through North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation to secure generating resources. We buy power that is generated from power plants fueled by nuclear, coal, hydro, and natural gas resources. NCEMC either owns the plants or buys the power from neighboring utilities. By joining with the other cooperatives, we are able to gain economies of scale that otherwise may not be available.

Recently, NCEMC announced it would be increasing its costs to compensate for an additional \$40 million of unforeseen costs to purchase power. As a result, Lumbee River EMC operating costs will increase proportionately. We currently make up approximately 10% of the NCEMC system, which represents an increase of approximately \$4 million.

As our member-consumers, we must ask you to share in these costs. Maintaining dependable service at the most affordable price possible remains the cornerstone of

our business. To accomplish the goal, we must also protect the integrity and financial stability of our organization.

We want to reassure you that Lumbee River EMC will remain proactive in planning for your future energy needs. We work hard to anticipate any potential issues that could escalate the costs of energy. We work to minimize the impact those issues could have on your energy bill. There are times when unforeseen circumstances cause change or have the potential to change the stability of our cooperative. This is one of those times. Although we must raise our price to cover the costs of doing business, we are committed to ensuring this occurrence has the smallest possible impact on you.

We are committed to providing you with reliable, affordable and environmentally responsible electric service. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the implementation of this wholesale power cost adjustment (WPCA), we encourage you to call our office at (910) 843-4131 or (800) 683-5571. We will do our best to answer your questions and we look forward to working with you on ways that you may be able to reduce your monthly bill. We're here to help and to deliver the reliable power you've come to know and expect.

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# CFLs Last Longer; Use Less Energy

CFLs offer essential benefits, while requiring a small amount of additional care at disposal time.

Because lighting accounts for approximately 7 percent of a home's electric usage, it is one of the easiest places to save on energy. CFLs use two-thirds less energy than incandescent light bulbs by using less wattage while still providing the same quantity of lighting.

CFLs can last up to 10 times longer than incandescent bulbs. Because of their unique design, CFLs are typically guaranteed for 10,000 hours, compared with 500 to 2,000 hours for incandescent bulbs. Replacing old incandescent bulbs with CFLs can save, on average, \$30 throughout the life of the CFL. The average home has about 30 light fixtures, so replacing all of a home's light bulbs with CFLs could save almost \$900 over the lifetime of the replaced bulbs.

CFLs produce approximately 70 percent less heat than incandescent bulbs, making them safer to operate and can also help cut down on the home's cooling costs.

CFLs have a small quantity of mercury that is sealed within glass tubing. Mercury is a crucial, irreplaceable element in CFLs, which makes it an efficient light source. The typical amount of mercury in CFLs is about five milligrams, compared to 500 milligrams of mercury in an older home thermometer and 3,000 milligrams in manual thermostats.

As of now, there are no substitutes for mercury in CFLs, but manufacturers have taken substantial steps to decrease the amount of mercury used in fluorescent lighting products throughout the last decade.

CFLs are safe for home usage. Mercury is not released when the bulbs are in use, and they do not produce a danger

to families if they are used and disposed of appropriately.

Still, CFLs are made of glass tubing and should not be dropped or handled roughly, as they may break. It is important to be careful when removing the lamp from its packaging, installing it or replacing it. Never powerfully twist the CFL into a light socket by its tubes, but always handle the base when screwing or unscrewing the lamp. Always make sure the fixture is unplugged before replacing a lamp.

## Disposing of CFLs

Lumbee River Electric Membership Corporation is proud to announce that we are an official CFL recycling location. You can bring CFLs designed for home use to any of our six offices in a sealed plastic bag and we will dispose of them properly for you. If you have any questions, please call our office at (910) 843-4131.

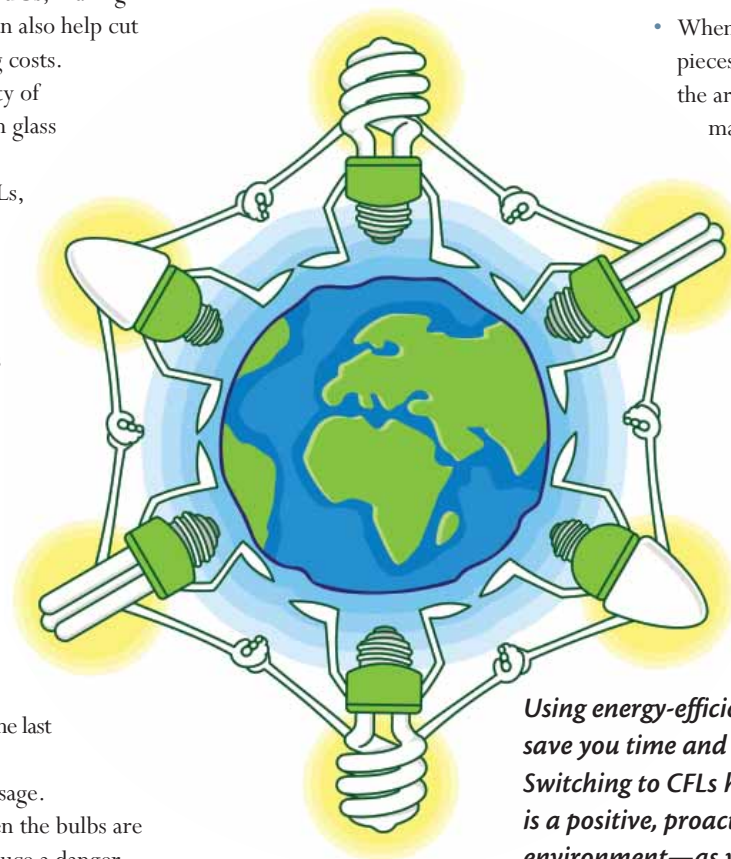
If you have no other option but to place the old CFL in your household garbage, seal the CFL in a plastic bag before putting it in the trash. However, if your waste agency incinerates the garbage it collects, you should search in a region that is farther from your home. CFLs or any other mercury-containing products should never be sent to an incinerator.

## What happens if you break a CFL?

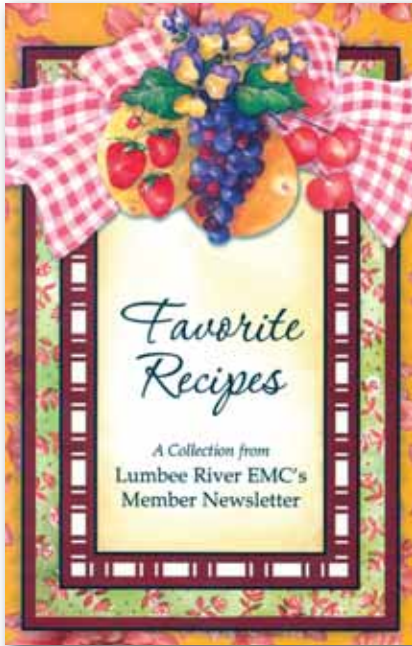
Because CFLs contain a small amount of mercury, a consumer's greatest risk of using the mercury-containing bulb is when picking up glass shards. According to research, your family is under no immediate health risks if you break a bulb, as long as it is properly cleaned up.

## How to clean up a broken CFL

- Sweep up all the fragments and fine particles. Do not vacuum.
- When finished, place the broken pieces in a sealed plastic bag and wipe the area with a damp paper towel to make sure any stray shards are picked up. Dispose of the used towel in the same bag.
- Open windows to ventilate the room, if weather permits.



*Using energy-efficient, long-lasting CFLs can save you time and money in the long run. Switching to CFLs helps conserve energy and is a positive, proactive way to preserve our environment—as well as your pocketbook.*



## EMC's "Favorite Recipes" Cookbook Makes Great Gift

**N**eed a unique gift for the person who has everything? The cooperative's 'Favorite Recipes' cookbook makes the perfect gift.

This one-of-a-kind cookbook contains more than 200 well-loved recipes, including appetizers, main dishes, desserts and many others. It sells for \$6 and can be purchased from any of the six Lumbee River EMC offices. Cookbooks can also be ordered via phone or by mail (a \$3 shipping and handling fee will be charged per book).

All proceeds will go to the LREMC Cares program, which assists cooperative

families who qualify as experiencing a crisis or emergency with their electric bill by local community service agencies.

While supplies last, when you purchase a cookbook you will also receive a FREE apron and pastry brush.

For more information or to order your cookbook, call (910) 843-4131.

## Keep Warm Glow In and Cold Air Out!

Don't let your hard-earned money blow away through drafty doors and windows, as well as uninsulated attics, walls, floors, and basements. As we stay indoors to stay warm this winter, save your money and reduce your utility bills by following the energy efficiency tips:

- Find air leaks inside and around the exterior of the home. Check around fixtures that penetrate walls, such as exhaust fans and electrical outlets. Look for unfilled gaps and cracks near dryer vents, chimneys and faucet pipes.
- Seal leaks between moving parts with weather stripping, such as between a door and its frame. Caulk cracks between windows and walls, as well as around door frames.
- Replace your screens with storm windows and doors. If you have older or leaky windows that you can't replace, consider doing temporary fixes, such as plastic film kits that create the effect of an interior storm window.
- If you are shopping for new windows, doors, or skylights, look for ones with the Energy Star label.
- Make sure attics and flooring above unheated areas, such as crawl spaces, are properly insulated.
- Have your furnace checked by a professional to make sure it's operating safely and at its optimal level. In addition, change your furnace filters monthly.
- Have a programmable thermostat installed to automatically raise and lower home temperatures for energy savings by day and night.

*Source: North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association*

*Hope you have happy holidays!*

### *Holiday Closings*

Our offices will be closed:  
Thursday, November 27, & Friday, November 28, for Thanksgiving  
Thursday, December 25, & Friday, December 26, for Christmas  
Thursday, January 1, for the New Year



### Energy Efficiency

### *Tip of the Month*

This season, decorate with LED holiday lights, which consume 90 percent less energy than traditional miniature lights, operate 30 times longer, and stay cooler (meaning increased safety when used on wreaths and trees).

**Source: U.S. Department of Energy**

# Don't Leave Space Heater Unattended (and other tips)

Many people turn to space heaters—both electric models and those powered by kerosene or even wood—as a convenient source of warmth in winter months. However, space heaters can be dangerous if not used properly.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) estimates that more than 25,000 residential fires every year are associated with space heaters. More than 300 people die in these fires. In addition, an estimated 6,000 people annually receive hospital emergency care for burn injuries connected with space heaters.

Space heater hazards stem not just from fires caused by contact with or close proximity to heating elements. They also include fires started by flammable fuels used in the heaters; defective wiring in the appliance; and carbon monoxide poisoning caused by improper venting or an incomplete combustion of fuels.

Here are some safety tips:

- Keep the heater at least 3 feet from flammable items such as curtains, furniture, or bedspreads.
- Select a space heater with a guard around the heating element.
- When buying a heater, choose one that has been tested and certified by a nationally recognized testing institution such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL).

- Buy a heater that can handle the area that you want to heat.
- Read and follow the manufacturer's operating instructions.
- Keep children and pets away from space heaters.
- Never leave a space heater unattended.
- Never go to sleep with a space heater on.
- Never use or store flammable liquids near a space heater.
- Do not use a heater in a bathroom—it's a high-moisture area that could cause damage.
- Keep heaters away from water to prevent electrocution.
- Do not use an extension cord with a space heater.
- Do not use the heater to dry clothes.
- Be sure the heater's plug fits snugly in an outlet. The cord and plug may feel warm when operating since the unit draws so much power, but they should not feel hot. If they do, unplug the heater and have a qualified repair person check for problems.
- Do not attempt to repair a broken heater yourself. It should be checked and repaired by a qualified appliance service center.

For additional safety tips on using space heaters that use wood or kerosene, visit the CPSC's Web site at <http://www.cpsc.gov/CPSCPUB/PUBS/463.html>

Source: *The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)*



## Change a Light

Receipt Deadline is December 5



Lumbee River EMC is encouraging members to replace their old incandescent light bulbs with Energy Star fluorescent bulbs by December 5, 2008, for a chance to win a \$200 Wal-Mart gift card.

All you have to do is mail-in or drop-off a receipt showing a recent fluorescent bulb purchase. On the back of the receipt, write your account number, name and telephone number and you will be entered in our drawing. All receipts must be received at our Red Springs office by 5 p.m. Friday on December 5, to be eligible for the drawing. Receipts should be mailed to:

**Lumbee River EMC**  
**Attn: Change a Light Program**  
**PO Box 830**  
**Red Springs, NC 28377**



**LUMBEE RIVER EMC**

P.O. Box 830, Red Springs, NC 28377  
910-843-4131 | 1-800-683-5571  
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