

These and other services are on our menu of options that might prove beneficial to you. Please contact the cooperative's customer service department for more information.

In addition, Blue Ridge encourages all its members to be personally proactive in addressing energy consumption. For example, an extra layer of clothing could enable residents to set the thermostat no higher than 68° in winter, producing substantial savings.

Each degree the thermostat setting is lowered results in a 3% reduction in heating costs!

For more ideas, visit our web site or come by one of our offices for your copy of "101 Low Cost/No Cost Energy Saving Measures".

Blue Ridge wants nothing but the best for everyone we serve. Please let us know what we can do to assist you.

Ways To Manage Your Energy Costs



1-800-240-3400 • www.blueridge.coop

The Cold Math of Old Man Winter: *Frigid Weather = A Big Impact on Electric Bills*

December 2009 was cold practically all month long and produced an average daily temperature that was 7% below normal. Then, January 1st saw an air mass move into Upstate South Carolina that was the coldest felt here since 2001.

Daytime highs barely rose above the freezing mark, while the mercury plunged into the teens most nights. To add insult to injury, this weather pattern lingered over our area for days and days on end.

Since electricity use is largely weather-driven, Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative members can expect to see higher-than-normal power bills this winter. The frigid temperatures make heating systems work harder to maintain home comfort. Colder water flowing into water heaters causes these units to consume more energy.

In addition, families tend to spend more time indoors during chilly weather, creating further opportunities for increased electricity usage.

Blue Ridge takes absolutely no pleasure in sending out high power bills to its members. Our goal continues to be the delivery of the best possible service at the lowest possible price. To that end, the cooperative offers a number of programs designed to help members manage their energy costs:

Levelized Billing...

Members pay a 12-month rolling average of their power bills. The higher bills of summer and winter are averaged with the typically lower spring and fall billings. This serves to lessen the impact on household budgets of extreme seasonal swings in energy expenses.

Heat-Pump Loans...

Low-interest loans are available to members with approved credit, for replacement of an existing system

with a high-efficiency heat pump. Numerous HVAC dealers across the Blue Ridge service area participate in this program. In addition, federal tax incentives are currently being offered to members who install energy-efficient heat-pump units.

Total Electric/Conservation Rate...

Homes meeting certain insulation and weatherization standards qualify for the EC rate schedule. This schedule offers a considerable pricing discount compared to the regular Residential rate.

Online Energy Audit...

Members are invited to go to the Blue Ridge website (www.blueridge.coop) to conduct an energy audit of one's own home. It's an interesting and easy process that can produce several ideas for reducing electricity use. From the home page, choose *Saving Energy* and then click on the *Touchstone Energy Savers House*.