



For All Your Customer Service Needs,  
Call Toll-Free (800) 240-3400

**Automated Outage Reporting**  
1-888-BLUERIDGE  
www.blueridge.coop

**Pickens**  
P.O. Box 277  
734 West Main St.  
Pickens, SC 29671

**Oconee**  
P.O. Box 329  
2328 Sandifer Blvd.  
Highway 123  
Westminster, SC 29693

**Anderson**  
1212 North Fant St.  
Anderson, SC 29622

**Greenville**  
3751 Highway 11  
Travelers Rest, SC 29690

**Mission Statement**  
Blue Ridge will be a competitive, quality provider of energy and other services, maintaining its history of integrity and adapting to the challenges of a changing world. While exercising leadership in the community, the organization's focus will be on exceeding customer expectations.

**Board of Directors**  
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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

## A quality heat-pump loan program

**MARCH IS A** good month to remind you that Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative has a popular program that's designed



to provide year-round home comfort for you and your family. Participating members can employ a low-interest loan from the cooperative to finance the installation of a new high-efficiency electric heat pump. In the last 12 months alone, nearly 100 members have taken advantage of this offering.

### Low 7.5-percent interest rate

The interest rate on these 60-month loans is just 7.5 percent. In addition, the member has the option of having each installment payment included on the monthly power bill. What's more, Blue Ridge maintains a list of certified dealer-installers who are well-qualified to outfit your house with one or more of these energy-efficient systems.

When it comes to selecting a new heat pump, a major consideration should be the seasonal energy efficiency ratio (SEER) rating. Under the Blue Ridge loan program, the heat pump for a stick-built house is required to have a SEER of at least 15. For a mobile home, the minimum requirement is a 14 SEER. Also, here are the maximum loan amounts available to members:

- ▶ Stick-built homes—\$7,500 for one heat pump or \$12,000 for two
- ▶ Mobile homes—\$5,000

- ▶ Homes installing a geothermal heat pump—\$7,500

### Free inspection

As an added assurance, the cooperative's energy conservation advisor will come to the member's home to conduct a free and thorough inspection of the newly installed heat pump. This individual is a professional who's trained to give a proper evaluation of every detail of the installation.

If you've reached the point where you're in the market for a replacement heating-and-cooling system at your premises, Blue Ridge is ready to help out. I invite you to call, email, write, or visit us. Our able member-service team is standing by to give you the needed or desired assistance.

Speaking of invitations, there are two other items I want to share with you. The cooperative's annual meeting of members is scheduled for Thursday, April 28. Just eight days later, on Friday, May 6, we'll host our yearly charity fund-raiser, Blue Ridge Fest. There's much more to be said about each of these events, and we'll give them both our full attention in the upcoming April and May editions of this magazine.

Sincerely,

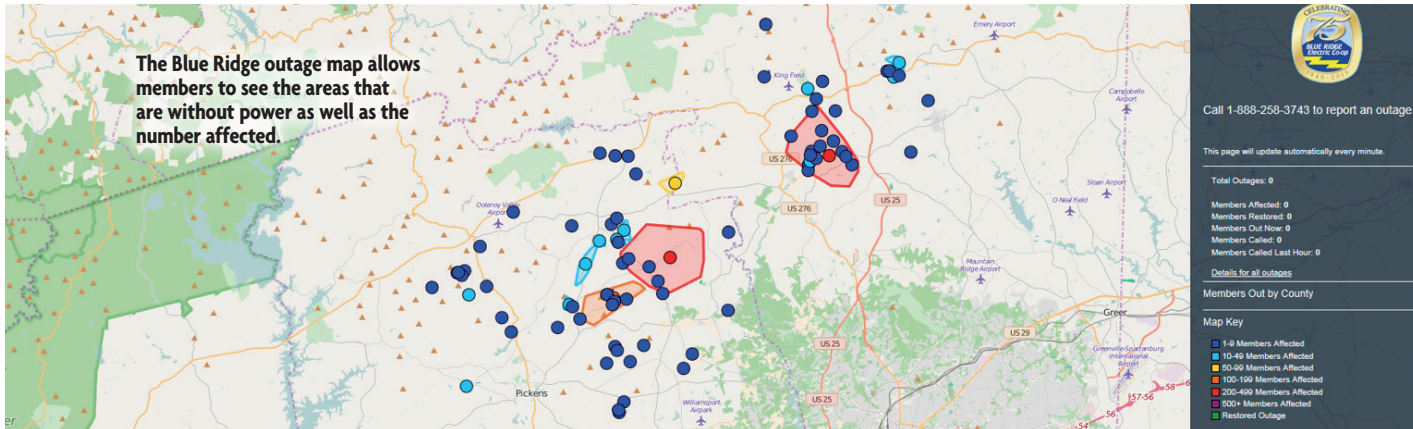
**Charles E. Dalton**  
*President and CEO*



### Good Friday holiday

Our offices will be closed on March 25 observing the Good Friday holiday. We will have crews on standby ready to assist with any emergency our members may experience. For outage information, please call 888-BLUERIDGE.

## Outage maps keep co-op members informed when the lights go out



BY TOM TATE

**DURING THE JANUARY** ice-and-snow storm that left thousands of our members without power, Blue Ridge's outage map was made available on our website. Outage maps are a great example of how co-ops work to keep members informed about their service.

Co-ops across the country are using this powerful tool to aid in power restoration and keep members informed during an outage. Outage maps are just what they sound like: a graphical representation of an outage displayed on a map of an electric co-op's service area. The typical map will show where the outage is occurring and, depending upon the system's capability, include information such as the number of members without power, icons for individual homes without power, and location of crews.

Behind the map is a sophisticated system that provides the data needed to populate the graphic. Because of the power of the information contained in these maps, co-ops are making them available online. Members can use the map rather than wait in a telephone queue to speak to a customer service representative about their power outage. They can check to see if their power is out or back on or get an idea of how extensive the damage is in their area—all with the click of a button!

We have recently added the outage map to the Blue Ridge app. Quite often you may not have access to a computer, but you have your cell phone handy. With the Blue Ridge app, you can simply pull up the outage map and see what outages there are in your area. While

individual houses and streets are not visible, there is enough detail for you to determine what your section of our service area is experiencing. The Blue Ridge app can be downloaded at no cost. Just visit the App store or the store for your Android device.

Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative provides outage information as part of our ongoing efforts to provide the highest quality of service at the lowest possible cost. This is just another benefit of being a co-op member. View our outage map online at [blueridge.coop](http://blueridge.coop).

**TOM TATE** writes on cooperative issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

### It's like a shower of money!

**IF YOU NEED** to replace your water heater, call the experts at Blue Ridge Electric and get more than just advice. With the purchase of a new electric water heater with at least a 40-gallon capacity, you are eligible for a \$200 rebate or even more if you replace a gas unit. And by buying a new energy-efficient electric water heater, you help the environment as well as save money every day. Don't wait and be forced to replace your unit in a hurry when there's no hot water in the tank; plan ahead and claim your rebate now.

### Getting a water heater rebate is easy!

Members of Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative who purchase a new 40–79-gallon electric water heater will receive a \$200 rebate.

Purchase an 80-gallon or larger water heater and receive a \$300 rebate.

**BONUS:** Get an extra \$300 rebate if you switch from a gas or propane to an electric water heater.

*Tankless water heaters do not qualify for rebates.*

