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MISSION STATEMENT

Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative will operate as a competitive provider of energy services and a partner with local communities, with a focus on safety, service and integrity.

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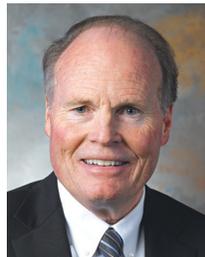
Jim Lovinggood

This organization is an equal-opportunity provider.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Compensating for mountainous challenges



RECENTLY, I was shown an S.C. Department of Natural Resources map. This map revealed that fully 56 percent of Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative service territory had been classified as “mountainous.” In fact, Blue Ridge is the only one among South Carolina’s 20

electric cooperatives that has a mountain range as part of the landscape.

We love our scenic mountains, but it doesn’t take much imagination to understand that this terrain represents a greater challenge, service-wise. I’ll not bore you with a list of those challenging factors. Instead, I want to highlight some of the system improvements the cooperative has undertaken to limit the potential for problems along our 7,000 miles of power lines.

Back-feeding

The majority portion of the Blue Ridge network of power lines has been designed to enable back-feeding capabilities. This feature involves the establishment of connection points between the backbone feeder lines that emanate from two or more separate substations. For example, if a substation were to lose power, an affected backbone feeder could be re-energized by closing the connection with the neighboring substation’s three-phase circuit. This action would restore service to the members powered by that feeder much quicker than normally would have been the case. We’ve seen the benefits of back-feeding, and our crews employ that option whenever and wherever it’s available.

Power line relocations

In earlier times, co-op construction crews would build power lines using the closest-distance-between-two-points practice. When extending facilities

to serve a new home or for other purposes, the most-direct route for the line was often selected. This procedure was utilized in order to minimize the dollar outlay for the materials needed to construct the line. The trouble is, what was once pasturelands or open fields have, over time, evolved into wooded areas. Consequently, these original line routes have become more susceptible to contact with falling trees and tree limbs. Now, when envisioning improvements and additions to the Blue Ridge power grid, our planners also look for opportunities to move electric lines out of the woods. Usually, the most-desirable placement for such relocations would be parallel to existing roadways. When situated along a roadside, a power line is less likely to have tree problems, and easier access is also provided for our service or repair crews.

Heavier construction standards

The rugged nature of our mountainous region—and the stormy weather that often arises there—mandates that extra measures be taken. Bigger poles, thicker cables, and stouter crossarms must be installed in order to cope with the stronger physical demands inflicted upon these power lines. Of course, these elevated construction standards translate into more financial investment in facilities than would be the case in Blue Ridge-served “flatland” areas.

These three spotlighted items represent just a few of the steps the cooperative is taking to ensure that you receive quality service. The fact that we’re privileged to serve some of the best people in the world makes it all worthwhile!

JIM LOVINGGOOD
 President and CEO

New payment option in Pickens

PAYING YOUR BILL after hours is easier than ever with My Energy Online, the Blue Ridge App, and the automated phone system. However, if you're one of those folks that wants to drop the payment off after hours or on the weekend, the new Blue Ridge Kiosk provides a safe way for you to do that.

Located out of the weather just past the drive-in window, a new kiosk has been located in the wall of the building. A real advantage of the kiosk is its real-time posting of your payment. When the payment stub is scanned and payment made with either cash, check, or a credit or debit card, your account is updated immediately. The payment kiosk is easy to identify and easy to use. Just follow the steps below.

1. Tap the screen where it says "Touch Here to Begin."
2. Tap ACCEPT for the user agreement.
3. Tap Blue Ridge Electric as the Company you wish to pay.
4. At this point, you can scan your bill in the check scanner OR choose NEXT to enter your account number.
 - a. There is no lookup feature. **YOU MUST HAVE YOUR ACCOUNT NUMBER.**
5. Once the account number is entered or scanned, you will be prompted to verify the account by listing the following:
 - a. The last name on the account,
 - b. The phone number on the account,
 - c. Either the birthday or last four of the SSN listed on the account.
6. Once the account is verified, you will be asked how much you want to pay.
 - a. The kiosk **WILL NOT** show you your balance.
 - b. The kiosk **DOES NOT** give change back.
7. Choose how you want to pay:
 - a. By credit or debit card
 - b. Cash
 - c. Check (Does not need to be filled out. Kiosk will read scan line and deduct the amount you request from your checking account.)
8. When your payment is made, a receipt is printed.



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