

Wake ElectriConnection

For members of Wake Electric Membership Corporation



"The power to make a difference"

APRIL 2013

Wake Electric to Build New Office Building In Downtown Wake Forest

Wake Electric has announced plans to build a new office building in downtown Wake Forest. The 28,000 square-foot office building will be located on South Franklin Street, around the corner from Wake Electric's existing Wake Forest branch office. The cooperative anticipates the building's grand opening to occur in June 2014.

The current office building, which Wake Electric is leasing, was built in the 1950s and lacks many basic design features needed by the cooperative today. The new building will provide better customer facilities with moderate construction costs at favorable, long-term financing. On the ground floor, there will be an employee and visitor entrance lobby, as well as a classroom and kitchen that replicate the ones in Wake Electric's Youngsville office. This space will be used for employee meetings, assemblies and meals during system emergencies, and also as a community resource.

The first floor will be similar to the existing Wake Forest branch customer service office with cashier and customer service functions. The main entrance from South Franklin Street will enter through the first floor. A large lobby and customer waiting area with a separate restroom are also proposed. A back-up energy control (dispatch) center will also be on the first floor off the lobby.

The second floor will accommodate the customer service telephone call center presently located at the Youngsville office. The



center will be moved to increase operational efficiency by having all customer service personnel in one location, and will also free up office space in the Youngsville location, which is essentially full at this time.

Also proposed for the second floor is an open multi-use space to be used for redundant "disaster recovery" space, in case Wake Electric ever loses the use of the Youngsville building in an emergency situation such as a hurricane, tornado or fire. Just as designing the electric system with overlapping substation capacity in case a substation is damaged is important, the cooperative has considered the need to provide some redundancy in its office facilities. Currently, the loss of the Youngsville building would be very challenging from a business continuity perspective.

Lastly, the third floor will primarily be unfinished space that will provide a relatively inexpensive solution to future

office space requirements.

The future office building is designed by Matt Hale of Hale Architecture in Wake Forest. The site plan was developed by Harry Mitchell of Bass, Kennedy & Nixon in Wake Forest.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP

Keep energy efficiency in mind as you plan spring landscaping. Properly selected trees, shrubs, and bushes can create a windbreak that will lower home heating bills in the winter and insulate your home year-round. Before you start, check on the right plants and techniques for our climate at EnergySavers.gov.



Source: U.S. Department of Energy



**Wake Electric
Membership Corporation**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Call to report outages: 919.863.6499 or 800.743.3155

Regular office hours: M-F, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Telephone hours: M-F, 7 a.m.-6 p.m., 863.6300 or 800.474.6300

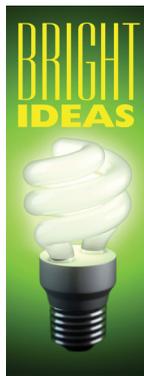
Underground locating service: Call 811

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Teachers:

Apply Now for Bright Ideas Education Grants!

Wake Electric has earmarked \$50,000 for classroom-based projects through the Bright Ideas education grant program for the 2013–2014 school year. Teachers may begin applying on Monday, April 1, for grants of up to \$3,000.



To learn more about the program and start an online application, visit www.ncbrightideas.com.

Bright Ideas, sponsored by North Carolina's electric cooperatives (which includes Wake Electric), strives to improve education in our state's classrooms by awarding grants to public school teachers in grades K–12 for innovative, classroom based projects that would not otherwise be funded. The Bright Ideas grant program is the only one of its kind in our state, exclusively for North Carolina's K–12 teachers.

The deadline to submit applications for the 2013–2014 school year is September 12. Teachers who submit their application by the early-bird deadline on August 16 will be entered in a drawing to win a \$500 Visa gift card. For more information, please visit www.wemc.com/brightideas.aspx.



Member Advisory Committee Meetings Were a *Success!*

Wake Electric held its Member Advisory Committee (MAC) meetings on February 11, 12 and 13, and they were a great success! More than 172 members attended and heard Jim Mangum, general manager and CEO of Wake Electric, discuss how the co-op leverages member equity to access the debt capital markets and taxes Wake Electric must pay, as well as the topic of renewable energy. He also discussed Wake Electric's plans for the new office building in downtown Wake Forest. Attendees at all three meetings enjoyed a dinner catered by Cook Shack of Louisburg. There were also several drawings for \$25 credits on electric bills and special Wake Electric afghan blankets.



Jim Mangum talks with a member before the start of the February 13 MAC meeting.



Members entered drawings for a \$25 credit on their electric bill.

Wake Electric board of director Suzy Morgan chats with a member at one of the February 2013 Member Advisory Committee meetings.

TECHNOLOGY CORNER

ADVANCED METER INFRASTRUCTURE (AMI) METER UPDATE

In March, Wake Electric concluded the initial portion of its meter exchange project. The co-op started exchanging existing meters to automated metering infrastructure meters in October 2011, and successfully exchanged all 35,000 residential and non-demand meters on the electric system. Those members now can see daily and hourly interval data by simply

accessing their SmartHub account and clicking on the "My Usage" tab. AMI meters store electric use, outage and voltage information, as well as communicate it back to the co-op office through a secure, wireless communication network. Wake Electric is now evaluating its capability to replace demand meters to allow those members the same benefits.

PowerUp with PrePay Program Revolutionizes Way Members Can Pay their Electric Bills

More than 350 Wake Electric members have switched to the "PowerUp with Prepay" program (PowerUp), a new and convenient pay-as-you-go billing option for residential members.

PowerUp allows Wake Electric members to pay for only the amount of electricity they want, when they want to pay for it. Members can prepay anticipated charges a full month in advance, or pay just enough to get them through the next week. The program is designed to optimize payment flexibility and allow more control over personal finances.

"PowerUp with PrePay gives members the opportunity to be fully in control of their account," said Scott Poole, manager of customer service for Wake Electric. "The technology we have in the field allows us to read a meter each and every day and calculate how many kilowatt hours a member has used. Based on those readings, we can then determine how much money is remaining in their account."

PowerUp allows members to put dollars in their account, and as they use electricity, their account balance will decrease. Members provide the co-op with an email and/or valid phone number, so the program will automatically notify them when their account gets low on funds.

"Wake Electric will call my cell phone with an account update when

"Viewing our monthly, daily and even hourly interval data helps us to control the electric use in our house."

—Co-op member
Bessie Perry of Youngsville

HOW POWERUP WORKS



Sign Up

We will make the set up process easy. Visit us to open an account and within hours you can be connected to our PowerUp billing option at your residence.

1



Load Up

Select an amount to deposit into your account to begin your service.

2



Receive Alerts

When your account balance gets low, we will notify you by email or phone call to remind you to reload your account. This is usually approximately 3 days before your account reaches zero.

3



Reload

Reload your account with cash, credit or debit card, cashier's check or money order. Whether you prepay \$25 or \$100, PowerUp will keep track of your power consumption and alert you by phone or email when it's time to make a payment to avoid interruption of service.

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it gets low, and also my co-op will notify me through emails to tell me my balance is low," said Bessie Perry, Wake Electric member from Youngsville, NC and PowerUp with PrePay user. "I can immediately go online and add funds to my account, or I can call Wake Electric and add money to my account. It's very convenient."

Members can simply reload their account and see how far they can stretch their dollars before making their next payment. By pre-purchasing electricity, members can budget and monitor their electricity usage more closely.

"Honestly, I did not think about the energy when I was getting my electric bill just once a month," said Perry. "With the PowerUp program, I am now able to see my bill before the end of the month and plan my finances accordingly. I love this."

MEMBERS CAN APPLY EXISTING DEPOSITS

PowerUp also allows members to apply any existing deposit from their traditional post-pay account towards

outstanding balances at conversion. Any remaining credit is then applied to the PowerUp account for future electricity purchase.

"Not having to pay a deposit has been quite popular with the membership," said Poole. "Our members have also been pleased that they can determine whether a prepaid or post-pay bill payment plan is best for them."

Other benefits of PowerUp include no late fees, trip charges, or reconnect fees, and there is no cost to switch to the PowerUp rate. The easy access to electric usage, payment history and credit balances online allows more control over personal finances and planning.

"This program has tremendously changed not just my electric bill, but also my life," said Perry. "I know I don't have to worry about the lights being turned off or that I'm not going to be able to pay my bill. I'm in control of what I pay every week, even every day."

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Local Students Honored at Wolfpack Women's Basketball Game

Two local middle school students received recognition during a women's basketball game at North Carolina State University for winning Touchstone Energy Sports Camp scholarships sponsored by Wake Electric.

Dara McCluskey of Franklin Academy in Wake Forest and Olivia Dougherty of G.C. Hawley Middle School in Creedmoor each attended the Kellie Harper Women's Basketball Academy at N.C. State last July on all-expense paid scholarships from Wake Electric. McCluskey, Dougherty and 17 other basketball camp scholarship winners from across the state reunited at Reynolds Coliseum in Raleigh on February 3 to watch the Wolfpack Women take on Wake Forest University.

Both McCluskey and Dougherty were selected for the scholarship out of numerous candidates based on their outstanding applications and essays. Dara is the daughter of Ed and Jan McCluskey. Olivia is the daughter of Ann Dougherty.

The scholarship winners and their guests were given tickets to attend the game and enjoyed a catered lunch. At halftime, the young women were recognized on the court, receiving a certificate of achievement. Directly following, a check for \$14,600 from Touchstone Energy was presented in support of the scholarships.

Stay tuned to find out who will be our 2013 Touchstone Energy Sports Camps winners. The winners will be announced soon via our website. One lucky young man will attend the Roy Williams Basketball Camp at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and one lucky young woman will attend the Kellie Harper Basketball Camp at N.C. State. For more information, please visit www.wemc.com/basketball.aspx.



Dara McCluskey, top, and Olivia Dougherty.

PowerUp With Prepay, continued from page 31

The PowerUp with PrePay program was made possible through the system-wide meter exchange that Wake Electric wrapped up in March (see Technology Corner on page 30 on this). The AMI meters store electric use, outage and voltage information, as well as communicate it back to the co-op office through a secure, wireless communication network. The new AMI meters are what give members access to daily energy usage reports online through the Monitor & Manage program, allowing them to better evaluate and manage their energy consumption.

MANAGING PERSONAL ENERGY CONSUMPTION

"When I go online to view my bill and my electric usage, I am able to see what my PowerUp balance is," said Perry. "The online graphs show me so much detail, down to what the temperatures were for the last several months and how that might have affected my electric bill. I can even tell when my husband and son get home from work, because my graphs show an increase of electric usage at certain times of the day. ... Viewing our monthly, daily and even hourly interval data helps us to control the electric use in our house."

Surveys have shown that 90 percent of those enrolled in similar prepay programs believe they use energy more wisely as a result. In addition, statistics indicate that pay-as-you-go programs help lower electric usage, resulting in real savings, sometimes by more than 10 percent, as consumers become more aware of their electric consumption.

For more information about PowerUp, please call (919) 863-6300 or 1-800-474-6300 or visit www.wemc.com/powerup.

Wake

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