

# Our Energy, Our Future – grassroots effort continues

Pressure is mounting in Congress to do something about climate change. And while political debates in Washington, D.C., may seem far away, the outcome will have a direct impact on our cooperative — and on you, the cooperative member and other electric consumers.

Climate change is but one aspect of a looming energy crisis created by increasing demand and decreasing capacity to meet that demand. Experts now say some areas of the country will be short of power within one or two years.

And yet energy supply isn't an issue on which our elected representatives are spending a lot of time. These forces, the desire by government to reduce greenhouse gas emissions quickly and the growing demand for power by consumers, are about to collide.

Some people say we can meet demand through efficiency and renewable energy. The reality is we need all the efficiency and renewable energy we can get, but that will not be enough.

To avert an energy crisis, the federal government must exercise true leadership, the same leadership that got Americans to the moon in the 1960s. Without that leadership — without a sound, responsible plan — government risks not only the reliability of our electric system, but literally the ability of many Americans to be able to afford to pay their electric bill.

We, as electric co-op members and constituents, must call on elected officials to provide this leadership. That's why I want to encourage you to contact your elected officials.

Now.

You don't need to be an energy expert to ask questions. Asking questions helps find the answers to solve the problem of balancing climate change goals with keeping your lights on and your electric bills affordable.

Right now, members of Congress as well as state elected officials are hearing



James P. "Pat" Howle, CEO and Executive Vice President

from lots of different interest groups who have ideas about how to address climate change. No one is talking to consumers, however. We need a plan people can live with today while we deal with the climate change problem of tomorrow.

To make things easy, we have a Web site that will send an e-mail for you. Go to [www.ourenergy.coop](http://www.ourenergy.coop) and plug in your address. There, you'll be able to ask a series of questions to your representatives in Washington. We're kicking this effort off with a basic but critical question: What are they doing to make sure we'll have the power we need in the future?

Far too often, questions don't get asked by policy makers until plans go wrong. We believe it makes sense to know the answers before the laws are passed. You can help your elected officials and yourself by having this conversation. The electric bill you save will be your own.

*James P. Howle*  
James P. "Pat" Howle

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Your Touchstone Energy® Partner  
The power of human connections

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(to report power outages only)

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### Hang onto this guide

This 2009-2010 Living in South Carolina Magazine Legislative Guide is provided in keeping with the cooperative spirit of service to the community. Please keep it as a handy reference for contacting your legislators.

Your cooperative responds to the community in many ways. Through established programs, your cooperative provides support for educational activities and scholarships. Your cooperative helps supply needed relief to local victims of disaster and personal catastrophe through local auxiliary organizations, working in concert with local social service agencies. Your cooperative helps improve the quality of life in many other ways. Support of healthcare and local cultural enrichment programs, such as festivals and fundraisers, has long been a cooperative tradition.

Why would electric service providers be involved in these kinds of activities? The answer is that they were created for, and by, local people. Service to communities is at the core of the cooperatives. Service means making sure electricity is flowing — and communities prosper. Doing all these things makes electric cooperatives more than electric companies. Cooperatives are people helping people. It is the cooperative way, a tradition that is a source of pride for all of South Carolina.

The 2009-2010 Legislative Guide is published as a service of South Carolina's consumer-owned electric cooperatives and is intended as a valuable tool for connecting with legislators. They can be reached by mail, e-mail, or through the Statehouse Web site, [scstatehouse.net](http://scstatehouse.net), during the 2009 and 2010 legislative sessions.

## More CFLs on the way!

Electric co-ops around S.C. will send residential members more energy- and money-saving CFLs beginning in February as the Do the Light Switch campaign continues.

Each of Horry Electric Cooperative's residential members with a mailing address in the service area will receive a single 20-watt CFL, which creates roughly the same amount of light as a 75-watt standard incandescent bulb. Last year, during the first phase of the Do the Light

Switch initiative, co-op members received a kit containing two CFLs — a 20-watt CFL to replace a 75-watt incandescent and a 23-watt CFL to replace a standard 100-watt bulb.

In addition to saving energy and money, CFLs last up to 10 times longer than incandescent bulbs. South Carolina's electric cooperatives plan to distribute seven million compact fluorescent lights to residential members over the next several years.

**Learn more about CFLs at [DoTheLightSwitch.com](http://DoTheLightSwitch.com).**

# Learn not to burn yourself

Teach your children, too

Horry Electric Cooperative observes Burn Awareness Week the first week in February but recommends the following safety measures every day of the year:

- Check smoke detector batteries regularly and keep replacement batteries on hand.
- Keep electrical cords out of reach and away from walking paths.
- Establish a safety zone in front of stoves where children are not permitted.
- Turn pot handles inward and cook on the rear burners so children can't reach them.
- Supervise children around hot liquids such as hot chocolate, soup and bath water.
- Lower water heater thermostats to 120 degrees, a comfortable temperature that will help prevent scalds.
- Keep candles out of your child's reach

and avoid lighting matches in front of small children.

- Teach children that matches, lighters and electrical equipment are for adult use only. Explain the dangers.



**Establish a safety zone in front of stoves where children are not permitted.**

## Statement of nondiscrimination

Horry Electric Cooperative, Inc. is the recipient of Federal financial assistance from the Rural Utilities Service, an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and is subject to the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, and the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture which provide that no person in the United States on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, or disability shall be excluded from participation in, admission or access to, denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any of this organization's programs or activities.

The person responsible for coordinating this organization's nondiscrimination compliance efforts is Abigail Lewis, human resources coordinator. Any individual, or specific class of individuals, who feels that this organization has subjected them to discrimination may obtain further information about the statutes and regulations listed above from and/or file a written complaint with this organization; or write USDA, director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410; or call, toll free, (866) 632-9992 (voice). TDD users can contact USDA through local relay or the Federal relay at (800) 877-8399 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (relay voice users). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Complaints must be filed within 180 days after the alleged discrimination. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible.



**CFL Charlie urges South Carolina co-op members to Do the Light Switch!**

## Survey shows high use of co-op bulbs

A recent survey conducted on behalf of South Carolina's electric cooperatives shows more than two-thirds of co-op members said they had installed both compact fluorescent bulbs (CFLs) they received in the mail last year as part of the Do the Light Switch campaign.

Of those who had not installed either of the two CFLs, more than 80 percent stated they intended to install them. Member satisfaction with CFLs was also quite high. Nearly six out of 10 members indicated high satisfaction, giving the bulbs a nine or 10 rating.

"Energy-saving bulbs perform so much better than incandescent bulbs," said one co-op member. "They save me money, are much brighter, and perform longer."



## Energy efficiency

### Tip of the month

To trim high heating costs, open draperies and shades on south-facing windows during the day to allow sunlight to enter your home. Close them at night to reduce the chill of cold windows.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

# On D.C. tour, 'the Wall' leaves its mark

By Walter Allread

Students who take part in the Washington Youth Tour rub elbows with new friends — and with history. But one of the Horry County students on the trip last summer rubbed up against a surprising family connection to our nation's history.

It happened at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, also known as "the Wall." Its black granite is inscribed with the names of about 58,500 American service personnel who died in the war.

Kourtney Wade of Conway visited the memorial with other Youth Tour participants, including Adam Gore of Loris and Taylor McSwain of Myrtle Beach, who were sponsored by Horry Electric Cooperative. Kourtney was sponsored by the Electric Cooperatives of South Carolina (ECSC). The statewide association of co-ops, ECSC each year selects a student whose parent works for one of the co-ops around the state. Kourtney's mom, Kolton Wade, is a customer service representative at Horry Electric Cooperative.

Van O'Cain, a public and member relations director for ECSC, serves as a chaperone each year and arranges the tour.

O'Cain planned a special activity at the Wall. He recalls, "I gave each student a card with the name of a soldier from their hometown who had been killed in the war. Each student's mission was to find the soldier on the wall, then create an etching of the name with pencils and parchment paper."

As it turned out, the name O'Cain gave Kourtney held a special significance. "Later in the evening, Kourtney told me that she called her mom to tell her about her soldier. Kourtney found out that the soldier [Sammy Bellamy Jr.] was her grandmother's first date!"

Well, close. Kourtney says her grandmother, Doris Baker Ballen, remembered Bellamy fondly. "He was her first puppy love in the sixth grade," she explains.

Not every student will have such a unique experience on the Youth Tour but Kourtney highly recommends it. "I had so much fun and saw so many things and met so many great people. It was an experience I will always remember," she says.



Taylor McSwain reads names on the "the Wall" during the 2008 Youth Tour. Her fellow Youth Tour delegate Kourtney Wade, below left, later made a startling discovery about the name of a local serviceman on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Van O'Cain



Van O'Cain

Kourtney Wade at the U.S. Capitol, where she and other Youth Tour students met their congressmen.

## Juniors, don't miss your shot

High school juniors can apply now for a five-day, expense-paid trip to the nation's capital on the 2009 Washington Youth Tour, June 13–18.

Winners will join students from around the state and nation. They'll tour historic sites, learn about our nation's government and have lots of fun, shopping, dining out, seeing a play and cruising the Potomac at sunset.



The deadline to apply is Friday, February 20. An application can be found on the facing page.



Lindsey Smith

Horry Electric delegate Adam Gore, left, and his Youth Tour friend Patrick Vallentine find just the right souvenir at the Bureau of Engraving. If only it wasn't bolted down.

# Tragedy a reminder to use space heaters safely

**A** 91-year-old Newberry woman died in November after her gown caught fire on a space heater.

The space heater was an older model, local police said, and may have lacked adequate heating guards. The blaze spread to nearby towels but was almost extinguished when it melted plastic water pipes, which sprayed water on the fire, police said.

While tragic, the incident serves as a reminder to use electric heaters safely, according to Brian Chestnut, Horry Electric Cooperative's safety coordinator. "Taking a few simple precautions can save lives," he

says, adding, "If you have elderly or infirm relatives or friends, help them use heaters safely, too."

- He shared several recommendations:
- Keep space heaters at least three feet from flammable draperies, blankets and sofas.
  - To stay safe, make sure the unit is equipped with automatic-off features and heating element guards.
  - Place your space heater out of high-traffic areas and on level, hard, non-flammable floor surfaces — not on carpets, furniture, or countertops.
  - Do not overload circuits. Make sure the

unit is not plugged into the same circuit as other electric appliances.

- Don't use extension cords or multiple plugs with a space heater.
- Finally, never leave a space heater unattended. Turn it off and unplug the unit before leaving the room or going to bed.



Modern space heaters like this one have safety grills as well as automatic shut-off features in case the heater is knocked over.



## HEC 2009 Youth Tour

Read about the tour on facing page

Application/Nomination Form **HIGH SCHOOL JUNIORS ONLY**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Horry Electric Cooperative Account Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Congressional District: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's/Guardian's Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Guidance Counselor: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

How did you find out about Youth Tour 2009? \_\_\_\_\_

Recommended/Approved By: \_\_\_\_\_

*On a separate sheet of paper, please list academic and athletic school activities as well as civic and church activities. All applications must include a summary of the student's activities.*

All qualified applicants will be required to take a written test and participate in a personal interview. No essays will be accepted. Applications are open to all high school juniors, regardless of class rank or grade point average.

Send completed application forms to Toni Gore, Youth Tour Coordinator; Horry Electric Cooperative, Inc.; Post Office Box 119; Conway, SC 29528-0119

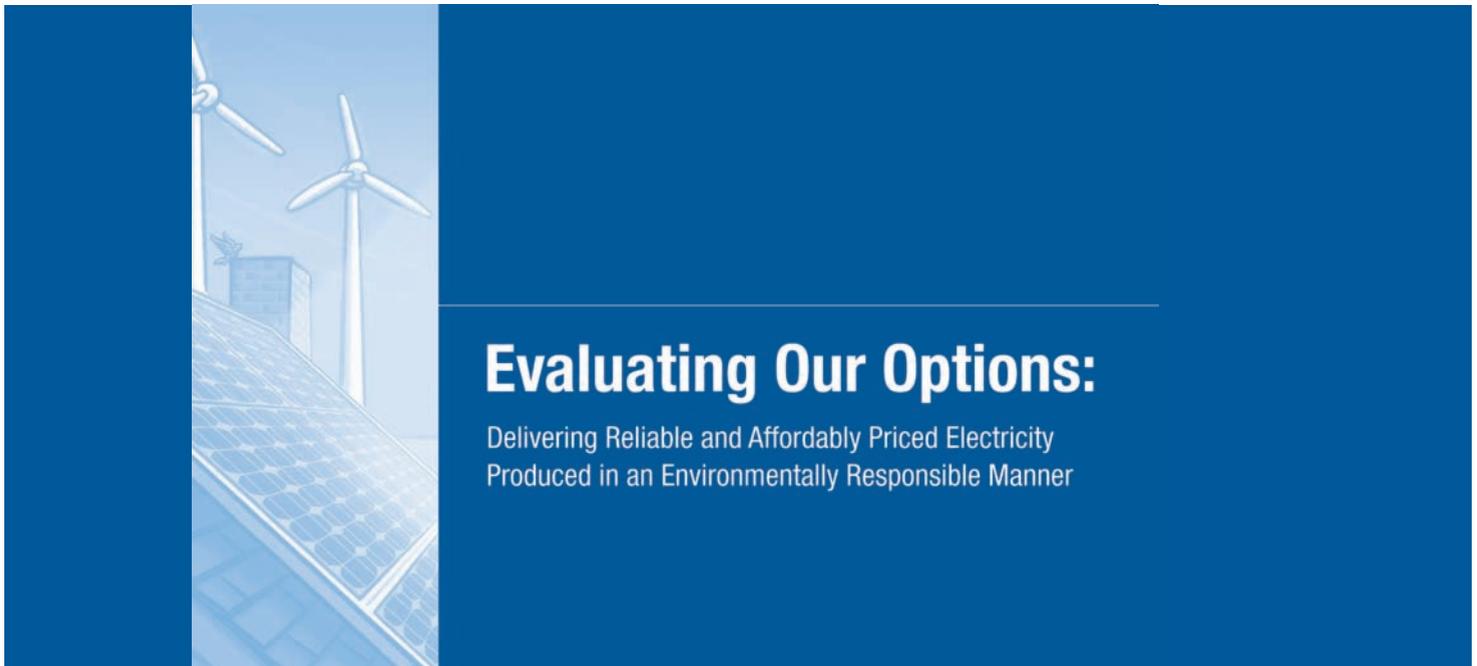
**APPLICATION DEADLINE IS FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20**

### Space heaters 'efficient' but ...

Space heaters are all pretty much the same. The infrared type is a convection model and, like all other space heaters, is almost 100-percent efficient. The rub is that, for safety, government standards limit output to 1,500 watts — far too low to heat an entire home or even a large room. A rule of thumb is that it takes 10 watts to heat one square foot of space.

The only way a space heater is going to help lower a bill is if you use it to heat the room you're in and turn off the heat (lower thermostats to 50 degrees or lower) in the rest of the house. Whether it saves money largely depends on how well sealed and insulated your home is in the first place.

The fact is, you'd be better off spending the money on weatherstripping and insulation if you haven't already made such improvements to reduce air infiltration in your home. Claims that a space heater can warm a 1,000-square-foot room are based on that room being sealed tight and well insulated.



## Evaluating Our Options:

Delivering Reliable and Affordably Priced Electricity  
Produced in an Environmentally Responsible Manner

# Brochure helps members understand energy options

Pick up a copy at your co-op or access highlights at [ecsc.org](http://ecsc.org) 📄

**S**outh Carolina's independent, consumer-owned electric cooperatives are committed to meeting the needs of their members by maintaining and delivering a power supply that balances price, reliability and environmental stewardship.

To help members understand the issues involved in meeting this commitment, Horry Electric Cooperative and other S.C. co-ops produced a brochure, "Evaluating Our Options: Delivering Reliable and Affordably Priced Electricity Produced in an Environmentally Responsible Manner."

You can obtain a copy at local co-op offices. A postage-paid postcard included with the brochure gives members a chance to offer suggestions or ask questions.

Some information in the "Evaluating Our Options" brochure, a section about "The Future of Fuels," is available online at [ecsc.org](http://ecsc.org), the Web site for The Electric Cooperatives of South Carolina, the co-ops' statewide association. A page in the site's Energy Center highlights the issues surrounding various fuels used to generate power in the Palmetto State. The affordability,

reliability and environmental responsibility of each fuel is considered. We've included sample sections regarding coal (existing technology), coal (new generation), nuclear, wind, solar and energy efficiency (treated as a fuel) in this edition of Living in South Carolina Magazine.

Visit the Energy Center at [ecsc.org](http://ecsc.org) to read more about your co-op's energy options. Or stop by your local co-op office to pick up a copy of the "Evaluating Our Options" brochure.

### The future of fuels: Coal (existing technology)

**Affordable:** The workhorse of the co-op system, producing more than 80 percent of co-op electricity. Building new coal plants using existing technology will be far more costly. Construction prices have doubled in the last five years. The cost of delivered coal has increased more than 50 percent in the last five years.

**Reliable:** Santee Cooper's coal-fired system serving the co-ops is one of the

nation's newest and most reliable. The average age of the plants is 21 years old (the nationwide average is 35). Santee Cooper's coal fleet runs at 90 percent availability, one of the highest percentages in the country.

**Responsible:** Newer plants are cleaner plants. Santee Cooper's plants are among the nation's newest and cleanest. Scrubbers and other filtration systems remove sulfur

dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>), mercury (Hg) and particulate matter (PM). One-third of a coal plant's operational costs are for environmental protection. Like all fossil-fuel-burning plants, they emit carbon dioxide. Caps and penalties on carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions being considered by Congress could raise the average household's annual energy costs by \$1,000 or more.

## The future of fuels: Energy efficiency & conservation (treated as a fuel)

**Affordable:** A Central Electric Power Cooperative study showed that hundreds of megawatts of generation can be avoided through improved efficiency. The cost of efficiency is more than coal but is far less than wind and solar. Co-ops have approved an energy-efficient lighting program using compact fluorescent bulbs and are

developing other programs. When seven million incandescent bulbs are replaced with CFLs, they will displace energy use equivalent to that of 35,000 homes.

**Reliable:** Actual savings in power generation are dependent upon how many members agree to adopt conservation measures. In the past, co-op-promoted programs have been selected

by less than 20 percent of eligible members. Verification of actual savings is difficult and many programs are untested.

**Responsible:** Nothing is better for the environment than conservation. Avoiding use means that less generation of any kind must be constructed and operated.

### The future of fuels: Wind

**Affordable:** Wind-generated electricity is the fastest growing renewable energy source in other sections of our country. In South Carolina, there are virtually no onshore wind resources. Cost estimates, environmental concerns and technical challenges limit current use of offshore wind.

**Reliable:** Until offshore wind resources can be effectively tapped, there is no reliable source of wind-generated electricity in South Carolina. Even when offshore is available, best estimates are that it will be productive only 25 to 35 percent of the time. Will it be available when needed?

**Responsible:** Wind power, along with solar, is viewed by many environmentalists as being among the purest forms of renewables. While non-emitting and non-polluting, there are drawbacks: offshore turbines could reach 300 feet in height and the underwater transmission of the current back to shore raises concerns. Studies are needed on the effects of large-scale removal of energy from the wind.

### The future of fuels: Solar

**Affordable:** Being used in certain areas of the country, primarily the desert southwest. South Carolina has limited potential for large-scale solar generation. It remains the most expensive form of electricity production, costing five to 10 times more than coal generation.

**Reliable:** Not reliable. Only available when the sun shines. Like wind power, it must be backed up with resources that are always available. Currently provides less than one-thousandth of one percent of S.C.'s energy needs.

**Responsible:** Clean resource. Can be used on small scale by co-op members to heat water and generally offset electric demand. Co-ops are encouraging the use of solar and other member-owned resources with a net metering pilot program that rewards those who generate some of their own electricity.



Pick up a copy at  
your co-op or access  
highlights at  
[ecsc.org](http://ecsc.org)

### The future of fuels: Coal (new generation)

**Affordable:** New coal plants will be more expensive, and the chemical plants operating next to them to remove pollutants will add even more to the cost. It is difficult to project costs of environmental protections for new plants. It will likely be more than a decade before we gain the ability to sequester carbon dioxide emissions (captured at the plant, and transported to, pumped into and stored in underground caverns). Environmental protection equipment now makes up more than 35 percent of coal plant construction costs and would increase to more than 70 percent with carbon dioxide capture and sequestration.

**Reliable:** In development, but years away, is a new generation of coal plants tied to Integrated Gasification Combined Cycle (IGCC) technology, where coal is turned into a synthetic gas and stripped of sulfur compounds prior to being burned. Carbon capture and sequestration is at least a decade away. No large-scale plants utilizing either technology are in operation.

**Responsible:** New generation coal offers great promise despite its likely high price tag. Much of this promise is built upon the hope of the U.S. being energy independent. The U.S. has more than a 200-year supply of coal. This rich resource is worthy of further investment in research and development of clean-burning alternatives. Developing technology to control carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions will promote a clean energy future and energy independence. S.C. co-ops are investing millions of dollars in research at the University of South Carolina focused on this technology.

### The future of fuels: Nuclear

**Affordable:** After construction, nuclear is the second-lowest-cost generation, following hydro-electricity generation. Heavy demand for the components of a new nuclear plant (concrete, steel, turbines) makes future construction costs very speculative. Permitting costs and delays also add to this price uncertainty.

**Reliable:** Our most reliable generation source. Plants operate at 100-percent capacity and are down only for scheduled maintenance. Makes up 10 percent of current co-op generation capacity. Co-ops,

Santee Cooper and SCANA are planning two more units in Fairfield County. If built, the percentage of nuclear would rise to between 25 and 30 percent of our total supply.

**Responsible:** Nuclear plants emit no carbon dioxide and, therefore, are not subject to the pending congressional caps and penalties (see Coal). The nuclear waste storage challenge remains. Alternative solutions vary from the long-delayed Yucca Mountain storage facility to the reprocessing of the waste by the U.S. military (similar to France's successful reprocessing program).