

# The NEWS LINE

RUTHERFORD ELECTRIC MEMBERSHIP CORPORATION

www.remccom

Vol. 26, No. 2

Owned By Those We Serve

February 2023

## Evaluating Costs In A Rising Cost Environment

We rely on electricity to power our daily lives. Whether at home or work, at the gas pump or grocery store, we need safe, reliable and affordable electricity. Unfortunately, real-world conditions affect the price of electricity. While the energy we use every day remains a tremendous value considering all the things it does for us - and especially when compared to the skyrocketing prices of other common goods and services - the cost of producing and buying that energy is quickly rising.

Everyone is experiencing higher costs for just about everything these days, and your electric cooperative is no different. As you are aware, US prices for energy commodities such as crude oil, natural gas, gasoline, and diesel have increased significantly over the past year.

Rutherford EMC has felt the effects of rising inflation, just like all of you. Despite the efforts Rutherford EMC has made to manage costs responsibly, the price of keeping the lights on continues to rise. For electric utilities, the cost of fuels has dramatically increased over the past couple of years. Natural gas is a large part of our power generation, so the extreme volatility in that market has impacted our costs to purchase electricity.

Global supply chain disruptions combined with labor shortages and skyrocketing inflation have dramatically increased the cost of all goods and services across our country. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, as of June 2022 the consumer price index had risen 9.1% over

the past year, the highest increase since 1981. Like the households and businesses we serve, the electric utility industry has not been immune to the impact that inflationary pressures have had on the price of goods and services.

As you may remember, supply chain issues started two years ago during the pandemic, initially affecting many household products. Those challenges are also affecting the utility industry. For many years, electric cooperatives have had equipment readily available to them from their vendors. But in these unprecedented times, cooperatives are facing inventory shortages, supply chain disruptions and extended lead times on most all material and equipment.

At Rutherford EMC, we strive to provide exceptional service and safe and reliable electricity to power your home, business, and life at the lowest cost possible. We have been able to avoid a cost increase for our members thus far, as a result of internal cost controls. As 2023 is now in full swing, we are continuing to see the impacts of inflation at every turn. The unprecedented increase in fuel costs to generate electricity has prompted Rutherford EMC to evaluate our costs to ensure we are generating the necessary revenue to meet our required financial metrics. Rutherford EMC makes every effort to keep you informed of energy industry impacts and the ways we are working to help lessen these effects and make life better for our membership.

### Value of Electricity



**1 cup**  
from the  
coffee shop

=

**38 hours**  
of brewing  
at home

Based on 13 cents per kWh, a \$5 cup of coffee and a coffee maker that uses 1,000 watt-hours.

### Value of Electricity



**1 haircut**

=

**333 hours**  
of using  
a hair dryer

Based on 13 cents per kWh, a \$40 haircut and a hair dryer that uses 900 watt-hours.



## SWAP SHOP

Rutherford Electric Membership Corporation provides Swap Shop ads as a free service to its members. Guidelines are as follows: Ads are published first-come, first-served. When the space allotted for ads each month is full, remaining ads will be held over for the next issue. Ads will not be run more than once unless re-submitted. Commercial ads will not be accepted. We reserve the right to edit, condense or deny publication of any advertisement. Rutherford Electric Membership Corp. assumes no responsibility for the content of any advertisement and does not endorse or warrant any of the goods so advertised. Please include your account number with your ad.

### Mail your ads to:

Newsletter Editor, Rutherford EMC, PO Box 1569,  
Forest City, NC, 28043-1569 or e-mail at [cbailey@remc.com](mailto:cbailey@remc.com).  
No phone calls, please.

## FOR SALE

**2007 Toyota Yaris** - very good cond., looks good & runs good, have maintenance records, \$2,600 firm. 864-441-7921.

**2006 Chevrolet Tahoe** - 5.3 liter flex fuel engine, 196,454 miles, rear wheel drive, 3rd row seating, rear heat & air, power locks & windows, very nice vehicle, asking \$6,800 obo. 704-692-2463.

**Ibanez electric guitar** - Model N427, solid mahogany, \$550; Ibanez hollow body electric guitar, \$450; Vintage Epiphone acoustic guitar, \$350, all in great shape. 704-922-7336 or 704-678-0983.

**Timberwolf log splitter** - Model TW6 w/log loader, 4 way splitting head, optional 6 way head, auto-cycling when splitting, ex. cond. \$5,500 obo. Nebo, NC. 828-460-1725.

**Registered German Shepherd puppies** - black & tan, shots & dewormed, health warranty, \$700; Registered Golden Retriever puppies - shots & dewormed, health warranty, \$500. 828-432-7412.

**Monitor heater tank & stand**, \$700; burning barrels, \$15 ea; 48" rusty sawmill blade, \$200; totes \$75; cages for hay, wood, etc., \$25, feed barrels, \$20. Hickory, NC. 828-327-4782.

**AKC registered Golden Retriever puppies**, all vet care up to date, Born Dec. 14th, asking \$1,000 if breeding, discount for pet price at \$800, can provide pictures and more info. Kings Mtn., NC. 704-923-5834.

**2004 Harley Davidson Sportster 883 w/1200 kit**, black in color, 23,735 miles, helmet included,

\$3,500; washer \$100; stove, \$75. 828-287-3944.

**(4) Hankook Dyna Pro AT2 tires**, size 275/60/20, came off a 2022 Ford F150, only 853 miles on them, \$900 obo. 980-522-1429

**Hardwood** - seasoned 9 months & already split, \$40 per pick up load, will help you load, located at northern part of Moss Lake. 704-600-8744.

**John Deere Power-Flo grass & leaf collection system**, Model 54 MOW, serial #IM00PFCHBHM091261, was attached to an X425 lawn mower; cost over \$1,000 new, asking \$300. 828-652-9009.

**Craft Wood insert** - 42" long x 22" tall, has 15" firebox w/catalytic converter, black in color, used very little, \$1,000; new Craftsman 1,500 lb. steel motorcycle/ATV hydraulic pump jack, \$200; 3 ton Trane XR central AC unit, 4 years old w/10 year warranty, \$800; A-coil, \$200; 3 pieces of oak bedroom furniture, made by Drexel USA, has a dresser w/mirror, queen size headboard and a dresser w/6 drawers, \$800; 9,600 Btu oil furnace in good cond., \$250. 828-334-0578.

**Fisher wood heater** - fire box is 34" x 18 1/2" outside, takes 24 - 26" wood, \$300.00; Undercover brand hard tonneau bed cover for 2005 - 2021 Nissan Frontier truck w/ 6 foot bed, \$250. Rutherfordton, NC. 828-287-7717.

**Benchcraft lift chair w/massage & heat**, chair is like new, only 3 months old, \$995. 704-735-6287.

**(3) extra-large Igloo dog houses**, (1) 10' x 10' kennel, \$75 ea. or \$200 for all. 704-445-0322.

**2017 Eagle V-Nose 6' x 10' cargo trailer**, has 3,500 lb. Dexter axle w/brakes (7 pin), gray aluminum exterior, diamond plated v-nose, upper storage cabinet in v-nose, side entry door w/keys, rear ramp w/dual assist, interior light, roof vent, 4 motorcycle D-rings in floor, total of 14 tie down rings on walls, \$4,000. Nebo, NC. 607-226-1135.

**Old Fender guitar**; 1954 Oliver Model 77 tractor. 843-670-9727.

**Red & gray colonial style 12" x 12" lattice star king-sized quilt**, machine washable, originally purchased from Pottery Barn, \$125. 704-530-7438.

**Vintage Saladmaster brand stainless skillets**, an 8" & 10" w/lids, does have marks from use, but in good cond., \$40 takes both. Iron Station, NC. 704-689-1438.

**Adult medical supplies** - (2) walkers, (1) bed table, (1) cane, all in very good cond., 1 1/2 packs of large diapers, (6) packs of bed pads, (32) pack of medium pull ups, full pack of fit right briefs, complete urine kit, portable breathing kit, digital thermometer, (6) pair of slipper socks, (3) packs of oral swabs, plus various cleansers, lotions, body washes & shampoos, all for \$125. 980-429-5319.

**AKC registered German Shepherd breeding pair**, female is 4 years old & has already had (2) large litters, male is 2 years old, both are sable in color, high drive working lines, they throw black & tans as well as sables. 980-281-3811.

**(2) male Llewelyn English Setter puppies**, lemon/white tic in color, born Oct. 12, 2022, full blooded, champion bloodlines, parents on property and up to date on vaccines & worming, make great companions or game hunters, rehoming fee does apply. 828-221-6970 or 828-522-1040.

**(4) Good Year Assurance Comfort Tread touring tires**, size 215/60/17, 6/32nd or 50% tread, all season, \$50 ea. obo. 704-732-8678.

**New Shark Euro Pro-X garment steamer**, \$35; new Chicco Grofit child's booster seat, \$25; like new Chicco Kidfit child's safety seat, \$45; Petmate small cat/dog carrier, \$25; Oster Deluxe bread and dough maker, \$40; Mr. Coffee iced tea maker, \$15; Mrs. Tea hot tea maker, \$25. 704-813-8744.

**Two piece curio cabinet w/glass doors**, 76" x 28" x 14" deep, \$200. 980-429-5319

## MISCELLANEOUS

**For Rent:** April 1 - April 8, 2023, The Christie Lodge - All Suite Property at Beaver Creek, located in Avon, CO. 1 BR timeshare for rent, \$995 per week or \$150 daily, negotiable, sleeps 4, on site & close by amenities, just minutes to Vale, CO., w/easy transport to/from Denver Airport. Condo is also for sale as a deeded property with annual use during Red Winter weeks (mid-December to mid-April). 704-732-8678. A commission will be paid.

## WANTED

**Old Gibson guitar.** 843-670-9727.

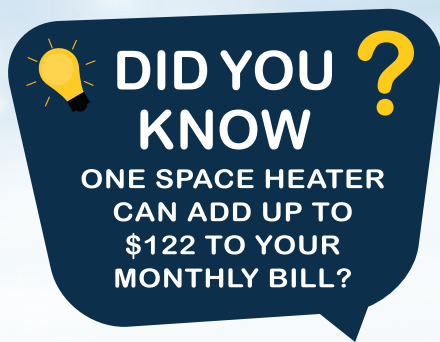
## *Middle Schoolers, Get Ready for Camp!* Apply Now for a Touchstone Energy Sports Camp Scholarship to Attend Basketball Camp this Summer!

Rutherford EMC is now accepting applications for full scholarships to attend basketball camps at two North Carolina universities this summer. Young men can apply for a scholarship to attend the Carolina Basketball School which will be held June 17-21 at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Young women can apply for a spot at the Wolfpack Women's Basketball Camp that takes place June 18-22 at N.C. State University in Raleigh.

The scholarships cover all expenses at the overnight camps, which provide a glimpse into life on a college campus. Campers stay overnight in dorms,

learn fundamental skills that will help them excel on and off the court and receive individual and group instruction from Division 1 coaches to enhance their basketball and team-building abilities.

To apply, students must be a sixth or seventh grade student during the 2023-2024 school year. The application period is open, and it must be submitted by March 31. To learn more and apply, visit [remc.com](http://remc.com) or [ncelectric-cooperatives.com/sports-camps](http://ncelectric-cooperatives.com/sports-camps).



## Is My Portable Space Heater Really Costing Me That Much?

Small space heaters are meant to do exactly as their name says: heat a small space. But unfortunately, many people use portable space heaters to heat their entire home, which can really take a toll on your energy bills. The typical space heater operates at around 1,500 watts, so consumes around 1.5 kW per hour. This puts their operating cost at a little under 20 cents per hour. I agree, that sounds rather inexpensive for a little warmth, but multiply that by 24 hours of run time each day for 30 days and you have added approximately \$122 to your monthly electric bill. The truth is, whether you should use space heaters really depends on your home's efficiency, energy needs and the added costs you're willing to pay for a warm spot in your home.

If you're using a space heater to compensate for problems in your home, like inadequate insulation, drafty windows and exterior doors, or an inefficient heating system, space heaters are not a practical solution. Your best bet is to improve the overall efficiency of your home. If you're on a tight budget, caulking and weather stripping around windows and exterior doors is a low-cost, easy way to save energy. Depending on the size of your home, adding insulation can be a very efficient investment. Taking these proactive energy-saving measures rather than relying on space heaters for supplemental warmth can reduce your heating and cooling bills for years to come.

Perhaps your home is energy efficient but you're cold-natured and want a specific room to be cozier than the rest. In this case, a space heater may work for your needs. A good comparison is ceiling fans; we use ceiling fans in the summer to cool people, not rooms. A space heater can be used in a similar way during winter months. Only use a space

heater in small spaces that you're occupying and, if possible, try to shut off other rooms to contain the warmth provided by the space heater. If you decide to use a space heater to heat a small area in your home, make sure the heater is properly sized for the space; most heaters include a general sizing table.

A word about safety: the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates more than 25,000 residential fires are associated with the use of space heaters every year, resulting in more than 300 deaths. If you must use a space heater, purchase a newer model that includes the most current safety features and make sure it carries the Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) label. Choose a thermostatically controlled heater to avoid energy waste and overheating, and place the heater on a level surface away from foot traffic when in use. Always keep children and pets away from any type of space heater.

Consider alternative ways to stay warm like extra layers of clothing or UL-approved electric blankets. If you have hardwood or tile floors, lay down area rugs to provide additional insulation and maintain warmth.

We know it's cold out there, but remember in addition to safety concerns they pose, space heaters can greatly increase your energy bills! Be sure to always read the small print on the manufacturer's box so that you don't have unusual expectations. **These heaters can get costly quick!**

If you're looking for alternative ways to save energy and increase comfort in your home, visit our website at [remc.com](http://remc.com) for more ideas. As always, Rutherford EMC is here to help you manage your energy use year round.

*Source: Abby Berry of NRECA*

## Reliable Electricity – An Investment Worth Protecting

I think we can all agree that a good investment is worth protecting. As a member-owner of Rutherford Electric Membership Corporation, you have invested in the electrical system that provides you with power each day. Have you ever thought about the security and protection cooperative employees add to your community by simply performing their daily duties?

Approximately 190 co-op employees are dedicated to the protection of your co-op's utility assets. This may involve something as simple as checking the oil in the pickup truck they are assigned or a task as complex as completing an equipment change-out inside a substation. Our field employees perform these duties each day to protect your investment in the electrical system. We strive to keep a watchful eye on this system each day as we make our way through your neighborhood, but our service territory is vast; it spans across 10 counties here in the Western Piedmont and includes over 7,500 miles of line, 47 substations and 16 breaker stations. We cannot be everywhere all of the time. This is where our valuable cooperative members can help out!

We encourage you, our member-owners, to keep a lookout as well. There can never be enough folks onboard when it comes to protecting the co-op's investment in safe and reliable electricity. All of Rutherford EMC's members are connected by the powerlines that provide them electricity. With this thought in mind let's work together to protect our connections and investments. Most of you pass by a substation, breaker station, or powerlines and transformers on your daily commute. We ask that you be aware of your surroundings and notify Rutherford EMC personnel if you see anything out of the ordinary. If you spot a tree limb dangling over a line from a storm the night before, let us know. If you notice an open gate at a substation entrance, give us a call. The safety of this community and the protection of your investment are of utmost importance to REMC. We appreciate your continued support!

*Submitted by:  
Kari Putnam of REMC*



# Watch Out for Faulty Heat Pumps

With the temperatures dropping and many Rutherford EMC members spending more time working from home, it is more important than ever to keep a watchful eye on your home energy usage. The device to watch the closest is the one that uses the largest amount of power, your heating and air system, which is typically a heat pump.

I have gained a love-hate relationship with air source heat pumps through doing energy audits and field checks at the co-op. An air source heat pump, when functioning properly, is “the next best thing since sliced bread.” However, when an air-source heat pump has malfunctioned, members can get blind-sided by a large power bill that is often easily avoidable. If I could offer one piece of advice, it would be to check to make sure that your heat pump is functioning during the months the unit is used for heating your home. A properly functioning heat pump is one in which the outside unit is running. The same device that cooled your home all summer must be running to efficiently heat your home in the winter. The fan on top of the unit should be turning, which indicates that the compressor beneath it is working. If you notice that heat is coming from your registers, but the heat pumps outside unit never turns on, you have a problem and I can almost guarantee you an electric bill that you will look at with disbelief.

To fully understand why malfunctioning heat pumps cause skyrocketing electric bills, we must fully understand how an air source heat pump is designed to work. A heat pump has two methods of providing heat. It has an outside unit that pumps whatever free heat is available in the outside air into the house. However, sometimes there is not enough outside heat in the air to heat a house. When this occurs, the heat pump automatically reverts to a backup heat system, called auxiliary or emergency heat. The backup heat is a series of metal strips that heat up much like a toaster oven. An air handler then blows air through the heat strips. The heated air comes out of the register at about 120 degrees. This backup system heats a house wonderfully, but the problem is this is *very expensive heat*! So if your heat pump ceases operating outside, your system will continue to function, but with very expensive heat. Another way to tell if your heat pump is inoperable is by looking at the thermostat. Depending on your thermostat, you may see the words *auxiliary heat*, *EM heat*, or an indicator light. However, some thermostats show none of these signs at all. The better approach, in my opinion, is simply to visibly inspect your outside heat pump unit weekly to make sure it is indeed, running.

The next step in making sure your heat pump doesn't consume unnecessary electricity is to keep check on the temperature of the air coming from the vents. This can be done with an inexpensive thermometer that can be purchased at most auto parts stores. A thermometer can be placed in a vent on the floor or taped to a vent in the ceiling. A properly functioning heat pump will produce air from about 95 degrees to possibly over 100 de-

grees. If the air coming from the unit is in the 80's or even lower your unit needs to be serviced or you have significantly leaky ductwork. As discussed earlier, if the heat coming from the vents is around 120 degrees that is a clear indication that your unit is using the backup heat source, or the *very expensive heat*, because the strips are running. This may be normal or abnormal, depending on the outside temperature. If the air temperature is in the mid 30's or lower, there is not enough heat in the outside air for your heat pump to bring into the house. As such, it will use backup heat to make up the difference. However, if the outside temperature is in the upper 30's or higher, your heat pump is not operating correctly and should be checked by a qualified technician.

Rutherford EMC is committed to helping our members use electricity as efficiently as possible. We advocate low-cost methods to save energy for the simple reason that high-cost methods are rarely cost effective over a reasonable amount of time. One of the most valuable things that we give members is the knowledge of where their energy dollars are going. Armed with this information, members can then decide which trade-offs they are willing to make in order to keep their electric bills manageable.

*Original Article by Chris Powell of Albemarle EMC*



*Knowing how to spot a faulty heat pump could save you considerable money on heating this winter.*



## IF YOUR POWER GOES OFF



1. Check your fuses or circuit breakers. If you live in a mobile home, be sure to check your switch box outside (if you have one).
2. Look around and see if you can spot the trouble (for example: fallen trees, broken poles, etc.). Try to find out if any of your neighbors are out of power also.
3. Then call any REMC office listed at right. Phones are answered 24 hours a day.

## REMC OFFICES & PHONE NUMBERS

FOREST CITY  
(828) 245-1621 or  
1-800-521-0920  
(Toll Free)

MORGANTON  
(828) 584-1410 or  
1-800-228-9756  
(Toll Free)

MARION  
(828) 652-2136

CHERRYVILLE  
(704) 435-5401 or  
1-800-228-5331  
(Toll Free)

GASTONIA  
(704) 629-6226

LINCOLNTON  
(704) 735-5381

