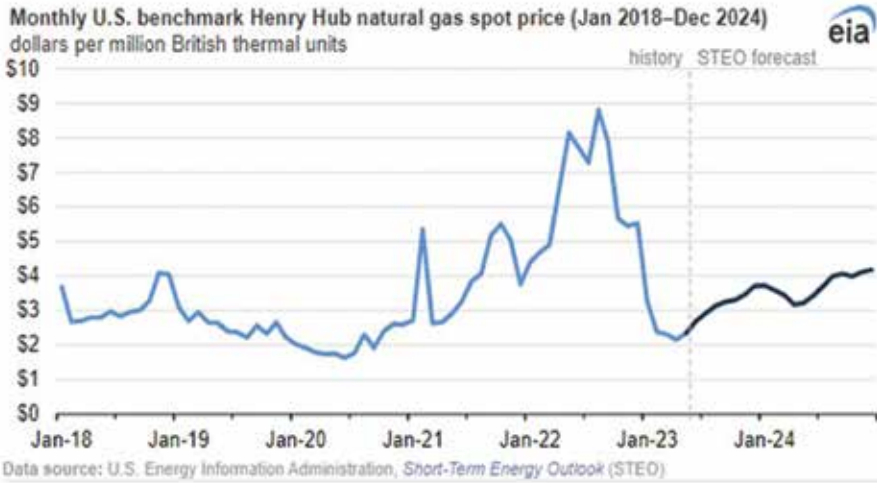




# Continued Rise in Costs Leads to Cooperative’s Tough Decision

Rutherford EMC strives to provide exceptional service and safe, reliable electricity at the lowest possible cost. Part of that includes making responsible decisions when it comes to managing costs. Unfortunately, real-world conditions affect the price we all pay for the great convenience of electricity. We are all experiencing the impacts of inflation. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, as of June 2022 the consumer price index had risen 9.1%, the highest increase since 1981. So how do these national price increases affect your cooperative? These are the issues Rutherford EMC has been carefully navigating. We are most concerned with the increase in fuels and material costs.

There has been an unprecedented increase in fuel costs to generate electricity over the last three years. In 2022 natural gas prices were 65.8% higher than in 2021. These prices seem to have stabilized at this time; however, it is forecast they will start to rise again as we near the end of 2023. This is placing upward pressure on Rutherford EMC’s rates. Since natural gas is Duke Energy’s primary fuel source for generating electricity, the wholesale cost Rutherford EMC must pay to purchase electricity from Duke Energy has increased as well. The increase in natural gas prices has created an unavoidable pass-through cost from Duke Energy, that we have been forced to manage.



Material costs within the electric utility industry are not immune to the impact of inflationary pressures either. The materials we use for electric line construction have doubled and tripled in price. Global supply chain disruptions that began in 2020 combined with labor shortages have dramatically increased the cost your cooperative must pay to build and maintain the electrical system. Below are a few examples of the price increases we have experienced for our most-used materials over the last few years.

Material Costs by Year			
Material	2020	2023	Total Percentage
25 kVA Pad Mounted Transformer	\$1,324.58	\$2,014.68	52%
25 kVA Overhead Transformer	\$811.64	\$1473.93	82%
Primary underground wire	\$1.94 per foot	\$3.79 per foot	95%
Electrical Conduit Pipe	\$0.85 per foot	\$3.61 per foot	325%

Unfortunately, this is just a small representation of the increases Rutherford EMC has experienced. Most of our other construction equipment and materials have suffered drastic increases as well.

(continued on page 16)

## Rising costs (continued from page 15)...

At the board meeting on June 27, 2023, the Board of Directors reviewed the data confirming the skyrocketing increase in pass-through wholesale power costs from Duke Energy, as well as the data supporting the drastic increases in construction materials. The Board concluded that Rutherford EMC cannot continue to absorb all these outrageous increases with the current rate structure in place. Therefore, a decision was made that a portion must be passed on in the form of a rate increase for all of the cooperative's billing schedules.

Effective July 1, 2023, the basic facilities charge for residential members will be \$24 per month, and the energy charge per kilowatt-hour (kWh) will be \$0.10875. It has been decided that the Wholesale Power Cost Adjustment (WPCA) will not be a charge at this time. Keep in mind, the WPCA is subject to change throughout the year and may become a charge or credit as needed. As a result, the residential member consuming 1,000 kWh per month will notice an increase of \$5.50 per month.

Despite these rising costs, the average daily price of electricity for our residential members is still less than a Big Mac meal. So please remember, electricity remains a good value. Our commitment to you is to provide reliable and affordable electricity. We understand that in today's economy it takes every dollar earned to survive. We would like to offer some energy-saving tips to help you save a few extra dollars as we enter the hottest season of the year.

This summer, consider setting your thermostat a few degrees higher to save on energy costs. Raising the temperature by just two degrees will help decrease cooling costs by about 5%. Ceiling fans can also help by making the room feel up to 4 degrees cooler than it actually is, but make sure to turn it off when you leave the room. Change your air filters regularly and keep them clean. Dirty air filters make your system work harder, increasing cooling costs. Close blinds on the sunny side of your home to avoid excess heat from the sun. Also, consider using a microwave or outside grill for cooking. Both of these use much less power than an oven and can help you avoid creating indoor heat that your AC has to overcome. Use LED bulbs; these light bulbs use a fraction of the energy of traditional bulbs and produce far less heat. Finally, water heating is typically the second largest energy user in your home, behind air conditioning. Washing your clothes in cold water can also cut down on energy use.

As always, we offer free home energy assessments to discuss strategies to reduce your energy consumption and help you save money on your monthly bill. Members can also take advantage of REMC's free budget billing program which calculates an average monthly bill, keeping your bill predictable throughout the year. You can find more information and energy-saving tips on our website at [remc.com](http://remc.com), and if you have any questions we are here to help.

## POOL SAFETY REMINDER

Never bring corded, electrical  
items near the swimming pool.  
Use battery-powered items instead.



## 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

**Solid** wood antique butcher block on four legs, measures 30" x 30". Call 704-435-3195 after 4 pm.

**275-gallon** water totes, \$75; burning barrels, \$15; plastic feed barrels, \$20; solid top plastic or metal barrels, \$10; like new oil tank, \$200; cedar boards; Cub Cadet 50" cut riding mower w/23 HP engine, \$900; firewood cages, \$25. Hickory, NC. 828-327-4782.

**488** New Holland haybine w/9 ft. cut, good shape, \$1,500, obo. 704-462-1566.

**Black & gold** Craftwood insert, measures 48" long x 22 1/2" high, Temstate 3-speed fan, 19" wide fire box, like new, \$1,000; Trane XR 3-ton AC for central air unit, 6-year warranty on compressor, \$800; A-coil, \$200; 280 gallon oil tank, \$800. 828-334-0578.

**Snapper** rear-engine riding mower w/28" cut, handlebar type mower, 12 HP Briggs & Stratton engine, fixable or for parts, \$350. 828-433-8337.

**Muscovy** ducks: babies are 3 for \$10, larger 2-3 months olds are \$5 ea., adult egg laying, \$10, XL males, \$20; also have 2 large roosters, \$10 ea. Lincolnton, NC. 704-241-3734.

**Master** power window control to fit a 1994-97 Honda Accord, part in new, I found broken wire in

mine, paid \$239 will take \$150, Genuine Honda part. 828-437-0618 or 828-368-8849.

**Wilcox & Gibbs/II** Industrial Serger/Overlock Machine w/industrial sewing table on casters, great cond., \$300 obo, Dallas, NC. 704-860-3412.

**Local Honey** – pure quality quarts, \$16, have wildflower or Tennessee Sourwood, also have molasses. 704-748-3258.

**2017** Kawasaki Brute Force 750 4x4i, EPS Special Edition, always garaged, never horsed, 1,000 miles, 215 hours, extras include: electric winch, lounge seat w/trunk & also a heavy-duty front guard, Woodsman Green, great shape w/no lien, cash price \$7,500. Morganton, NC. 828-391-1176.

**AKC** Siberian Husky pups w/woolie coats, have black & whites and red & whites, blue eyes, can text photos & more info., \$800. 704-813-2763.

**AKC** Registered Beagle puppies, tricolor and lemon & white at present time, call for prices. 704-813-2763.

**Samsung** powered home theatre sub-woofer, 90 watts, Denon AVR-591, 5.1 channel home theatre receiver w/remote, (5) Samsung wall mounted 10/4 speakers w/connecting cable, \$100 firm. 980-429-2201.

**Kent 26"** tandem adult cruiser style bicycle, 21 speed, Revo twist shifters, Shimano rear derailleur, water bottle holders, owner's manual, very nice condition, \$300; pair of vintage 1978 Sansui SP-X8000 stereo 4-way speaker system, 17 1/2" wide x 26 1/2" tall, 160 watts, nice condition, \$275; stainless steel Lance Cracker's 2 shelf table top rack, has small metal Lance logo on front, very good condition, \$75; pictures available of all items. 828-448-0338.

**Tires** - 275/60/20 Hankook Dyna Pro AT2, like new, can send pictures on request, Dallas, NC. 980-522-1429.

**Martin** guitar X series special, solid spruce top, sound hole control of treble and tone, mint condition, includes Martin gig bag, bought new in 2022, \$550 firm. 864-441-7921.

**Two** cemetery lots at Westview Gardens, 1123 Edgewood Rd., Bessemer City, NC, lots located in Eternal Gardens, cost \$2,400, will sell both for \$1,500 or one for \$900, owner will pay transfer fee. 704-616-6051.

**Antique** Mahogany secretary, pictures upon request, \$300, Marion, NC. 828-442-1487.

**Electric** barber chair, back bar w/sink and mirror; hair dryer on stand and rollers. 704-867-4247.

**Brother** electric typewriter, Model SX-4000, LCD display, toner cartridge (TN-360), user's manual, only used once, \$250; Brother copier and fax machine w/user's manual, never used, \$300. Valdese, NC. 803-448-1077.

**Rare** coins for the serious collector – lots of rare Morgan Silver Dollars (1878-1922), most are graded MS (Mint State) or BU (Brilliant Uncirculated). Hundreds of American Silver Eagles (1986-2022), all graded or brilliant uncirculated. Serious callers only please. 828-437-5089.

**Grave** plot at Gaston Memorial Cemetery in Gastonia, NC., \$3,000, normally sell for \$5,400. Leave a message and I will return your call. 980-250-2955.

**Recording** King round neck resonator guitar, excellent condition, \$125. 864-441-7921.

**Nikon** digital SLR camera w/2 lens, bag and many accessories, excellent condition \$175.00 or trade for 12-gauge single shot. 864-441-7921.

## WANTED

**Craftsman** DYS 4500 versatile time saver mower, either good or for parts; also looking for a good tractor type mower, must be at least 46" cut w/foot pedal hydrostatic transmission, will pay premium price for the right mower. 828-437-5586.

**Need** someone to cut end of our concrete driveway, 12 ft., 4 inches wide. 704-538-5769. Polkville, NC.

**1995–2004** Toyota Tacoma, prefer 4x4. 828-874-4312.

**Parts** for a Mack B20P truck. 828-874-3539.

## Join Rutherford EMC in Recognizing 8/11 as a Reminder to Call 811 Before You Dig



On Aug. 11 (8/11), Rutherford EMC is reminding members to dial 8-1-1 at least three working days before beginning a digging project. This free and simple step can save lives and reduce risk of injury, repair costs, fines and inconvenient outages.

"Every time you break ground, even for something simple like planting a shrub or installing a mailbox, you should call 811 first," said Colon Saunders, vice president of Operations at Rutherford EMC. "No matter your level of expertise, it's important to know what's below the ground to prevent the potentially serious consequences of hitting a utility line."

The national 811 "Call Before You Dig" phone number links residents to a local call center, which then dispatches local utility companies to mark line locations with paint or flags. These marked lines show you where it is – and isn't – safe to break ground. Once your lines have been marked, make sure to dig carefully around the marks, not on top of them. Because utility line locations can shift, it's important to call each time you are planning to dig.

For more information about safe digging and the "Call Before You Dig" process, visit [nc811.org](http://nc811.org).

# Light up Learning with a Bright Ideas Grant!

Apply Early for the Chance to Win \$100!

Attention, K-12 teachers! Back to school season is here, and so are Bright Ideas education grants. Do you have an idea for an innovative, hands-on classroom project that will engage and excite your students? Apply for a Bright Ideas grant through Rutherford EMC to help bring your project to life!

Teachers who submit applications by the early bird deadline of Aug. 15 will be entered to win one of five \$100 gift cards to be given away statewide.

Rutherford EMC is awarding over \$15,000 in Bright Ideas grants this year to local educators to fund innovative projects that enhance classroom learning. The final deadline to apply is Sept. 15, but it might pay to apply early!

For more information or to start your application, visit [NCBrightIdeas.com](http://NCBrightIdeas.com).



**Bright Ideas**  
EDUCATION GRANTS

**Early Bird  
Deadline:  
Aug. 15**



Apply early for a chance to win one of five \$100 Visa gift cards.



REMC employee & co-op member, **Jud Wortman**, drafted some extra help from his children **Emma Grace, Baxter & Elena Jo** while trying to beat the rain that drenched our service area over **Memorial Day weekend**.

## REMC's In-Person Annual Meeting is Back!

We cannot wait to see you!

Rutherford EMC will hold an in-person Annual Meeting this October for the first time in three years!

Be on the lookout for more details over the next few months.