

Published for Member/Owners of **EnergyUnited**

# connect

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## Annual Meeting of Members - Better Together

Nearly 1,000 people attended the 2013 EnergyUnited Annual Meeting of Members on Saturday, September 21 at Davie County High School in Mocksville, N.C. Those in attendance for the annual event enjoyed products and services displays, safety demonstrations, a health fair and most importantly, an informative business meeting led by EnergyUnited executives. Best of all, the rain held out until after the event was complete!

In August, members were asked to vote via mail-in ballot for two members of the EnergyUnited board of directors from district two. Incumbents Jeannette Overby and N. Mack Shoaf were re-elected - Overby to a four-year term and Shoaf for three. Results were announced during the meeting.

EnergyUnited CEO, H. Wayne Wilkins, addressed members during the business meeting and spoke about success stories, EnergyUnited's commitment to the environment and clean air, and about rising costs. Board of Directors President, Dr. Max Walser, spoke about changes that will be made to the annual meeting in the future, including a more streamlined event with

emphasis on the business meeting itself and additional forums and activities that will take place throughout the year at EnergyUnited regional offices or within the communities we serve.

Many of EnergyUnited's partners contributed door prizes and they were a highlight of the event. Prizes included a gas grill from EnergyUnited Propane, a 32" LCD television, a variety of gift cards, an Apple iPad donated by Wireless Communications, Inc. and a Troy-Bilt generator donated by Power Secure.



**Our offices will be closed November 28th and 29th in observance of Thanksgiving. Crews will be on call.**



## Control energy costs while preparing holiday feasts

The U.S. Department of Energy estimates that cooking alone accounts for four percent of total home energy use, and this figure doesn't even include the energy costs associated with refrigeration, hot water heating, and dishwashing.

As holiday parties and potluck dinners gear up, keep these tips in mind to help control energy costs:

- Don't peek. Every time the oven door is opened, the temperature inside is reduced by as much as 25 degrees, forcing it to use more energy to get back to the proper cooking temperature.

- Turn it down or turn it off. For regular cooking, it's probably not necessary to have your oven on as long—or set as high—as the recipe calls for. For recipes that need to bake for longer than an hour, pre-heating the oven isn't necessary. And residual heat on an electric oven or stovetop will finish the last 5 to 10 minutes of baking time. Just remember to keep the oven door closed or the lid on until time is up. Alternately, if you're baking in a ceramic or glass dish, you can typically set your oven at 25 degrees less than the recipe calls for. Because ceramic and glass hold heat better than metal pans, your dish will cook just as well at a lower temperature.

- Give your burners a break. For your stovetop to function effectively, it's important that the metal reflectors under your electric stove burners stay free of dirt and grime.

- Don't neglect your slowcooker, your microwave,

toaster oven or warming plate. For example, the average toaster oven can use up to half the energy of the average electric stove over the same cooking time. Information to help you estimate how much energy your own appliances use is available on [EnergySavers.gov](http://EnergySavers.gov).

- Give your furnace the day off. If your party involves a lot of work for your stove, think about turning down the furnace to compensate. The heat of the oven and all those guests will keep the temperature comfortable.

- Make contact. Electric stovetops can only transmit heat to pans they are in direct contact with; the less contact your pan has with the burner, the more energy the stovetop will have to expend to heat the pan. If cooking with your warped pan is taking longer than it should, it may be time for a flat-bottomed update.



*Energy efficient microwaves can equal large savings*



## Transition to LED security lights set to begin

Last year, the *Connect* newsletter brought members information about a change to the EnergyUnited security lights program. After a thorough evaluation, it was decided that all existing 175-watt, residential mercury vapor lights in the EnergyUnited system would be replaced with light-emitting diode (LED) security lights. We made this decision for several reasons. LED lighting is known for longer lasting, white lights and are a much greener technology than mercury vapor lighting. In addition, an LED fixture should last 15-20 years without maintenance, which is over three times longer than a mercury vapor fixture. The energy savings and reduced maintenance costs will allow the monthly rate to remain the same.

The replacement process will begin later this year. EnergyUnited contract crews will replace approximately 700 mercury vapor lights per month. With 25,000 security lights in our system, this change out process should take approximately three years to complete. Lights will be replaced based on geographic area. As the replacement process progresses, members with security lights will receive an outbound call from EnergyUnited two weeks prior to the date on which their lights are scheduled to be replaced. Please call 1-800-522-3793 during regular business hours to speak to a customer care representative if you have questions about this process.

*New LED Security Lights*



*Traditional Security Lights*





*From the desk of  
H. Wayne Wilkins,  
Chief Executive Officer*



## Why I'm thankful for my co-op

At my family's Thanksgiving dinner each year, we all take turns saying something for which we are grateful. My list is usually about the same—good health, wonderful family and friends, and a job serving the great people of North Carolina.

I'm thankful to be a part of EnergyUnited. Our employees are not only some of the hardest workers I know, but the most caring too. Every year, EnergyUnited employees take part in a host of charitable activities both at work and away. EnergyUnited employees live in the communities we serve so each time we hold a food drive, fill shoeboxes full of supplies for children or work to support the United Way, we are supporting our own communities.

I'm thankful for my cooperative because it serves as a vibrant force in the local economy—partly because we are local. One of the best things about a cooperative is that it's locally owned and operated; there are no distant shareholders pulling the strings behind the scenes. Members elect members to serve on the board of directors and govern the co-op. We are your neighbors, your friends, your family. That means EnergyUnited is invested in the future of its communities. Our mission is to provide affordable, reliable, safe electric power, but we

also aim to improve the quality of life in the communities we serve. It's a mission we all take very seriously.

I'm thankful for my cooperative because we care. From sponsoring high schoolers to visit our nation's capital as part of the Rural Electric Youth Tour, grants to k-12 educators to fund projects that might otherwise go unfunded and reaching out to members with information that will help them save energy and money, we care about the people and the communities we serve.

Finally, I'm thankful for you, our members and faithful readers, because without you, there'd be no EnergyUnited. Our member volunteers who participate in the Member Advisory Committees, the Credentials and Elections Committee, the Nominating Committee and our board of directors are made up of members who, like me, genuinely care about the business of EnergyUnited. I am thankful for every one of you.

Happy Thanksgiving from all of us here at your electric cooperative. May the 2013 holiday season be full of family, friends and happiness for you all.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "H. Wayne Wilkins". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

## EnergyUnited warns members of utility scam

Thieves posing as electric utility representatives continue to prey on unsuspecting consumers across the country, including members of EnergyUnited. The cooperative urges its members to be aware of this scam and never provide anyone who calls you with personal or account information.

A typical scam scenario happens as follows: A member receives an unsolicited phone call from someone who falsely claims to be a representative EnergyUnited. That person tells the member that his or her service will be disconnected if the member does not make an immediate payment to the cooperative. In some cases, the scammer insists on receiving payment within an hour and instructs the member to either purchase a prepaid debit card and provide the details of that debit

card or turn over credit card information.

Scammers were previously targeting mainly Spanish speaking members, but they have branched out and are now targeting members from many different backgrounds. We are aware of several businesses in the Lake Norman area have been targeted by these scammers in recent months.

EnergyUnited would never contact a member requesting payment that will result in immediate disconnection of service. If you doubt the identity of someone claiming to represent the cooperative, hang up and call us at 1-800-522-3793.

EnergyUnited urges its members to be aware of this scam and asks that members share this information with family and friends to help put a stop to it.

## Rural Electric Youth Tour alumni - We're searching for you!

For the past 50 years, students have attended the Rural Electric Youth Tour in Washington D.C., visiting monuments, meeting elected officials and learning about rural electrification. Cooperatives such as EnergyUnited have sponsored youth to be a part of this amazing opportunity over the years.

With the 50th anniversary of the Youth Tour upon us, the search for alumni has begun. Are you one of the youth who walked the streets of D.C. for the Rural Electric Youth Tour? If you are, you can join the database of Youth Tourists at <http://ncelectriccooperatives.com/community/youthtour/alumni.aspx>. Tell us your story, where you are now, or what impact the trip made on you. Help celebrate 50 years of a trip of a lifetime!



## Play it safe - wall outlets

Wall outlets are the bridge from electricity to appliances; they make it possible for our lamps, cell phone chargers, coffee makers and televisions to run. Most of the time, we don't even think about how that happens or whether there are any dangers associated with it, but there are a few things you can look out for to keep your home and your family safe.

- Make sure to regularly check your outlets for damages. All wires should be covered and plates should be tightened down. If the plates are cracked, they should be replaced immediately.
- If your outlets are warm to the touch or discolored, contact a qualified electrician to determine the cause.
- If you have an older home, consider upgrading your outlets to the safer, three-prong style that is grounded. If you don't have three-prong outlets, be careful to never

force a three-prong plug into a two-slot outlet.

- GFCI outlets should be installed in any area where there is water, such as kitchens, pools, crawl spaces and bathrooms. These outlets monitor electricity flowing in a circuit and trip the circuit if an imbalance is detected, protecting people from electric shock.
  - If you have young children in your home, cover your outlets with plastic child safety plugs to keep little fingers and objects out of tempting outlets.
  - Don't plug too many electrical devices into an outlet; this increases the risk of fire. Turn the switch to a power strip off when appliances are not in use.
  - You can also save energy if electrical devices not in use are unplugged. Pay special attention to phone chargers, television sets and computers. These will use up energy even if they are turned off.
  - When unplugging an item, make sure to grab the base of the plug. Pulling the cord itself can cause damage to both the cord and the outlet.
- Pay attention to your outlets. If you notice a potential problem in your home, arrange for it to be fixed immediately to prevent accident or injury.



**connect** is published monthly for its members by EnergyUnited. Questions, comments and story ideas should be directed to:

### Connect

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H. Wayne Wilkins  
Chief Executive Officer

**EnergyUnited**  
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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

1-800-522-3793

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