



Berkeley Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

TO REPORT OUTAGES

Call: 1-888-253-4232

DISTRICT OFFICES

Hours: 8 a.m.–5 p.m.

AWENDAW

North 7200, US-17
 Awendaw, SC 29426
 (843) 884-7525
 AWMemberRequests@bec.coop

GOOSE CREEK

2 Springhall Road
 Goose Creek, SC 29445
 (843) 553-5020
 GCMemberRequests@bec.coop

JOHNS ISLAND

1135 Main Road
 Johns Island, SC 29455
 (843) 559-2458
 JIMemberRequests@bec.coop

MONCK'S CORNER

1732 US-52 West
 Moncks Corner, SC 29461
 (843) 761-8200/(843) 825-3383
 MCMemberRequests@bec.coop

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Robert Vandross, *District 1*
 Sheila Powell, *District 2*
 Wayne DeWitt, *District 3*
 Sam Gourdine, *District 4*
 Denver Lee Clayton, *District 5*
 Willis Sanders, *District 6*
 Connie P. Shuler, *District 7*
 Robert Jenkins, *District 8*
 Henry H. Chavis, Sr., *District 9*

PRESIDENT & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Mike Fuller

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MIKE FULLER
 President & CEO

Setting new standards

IT'S BEEN ANOTHER busy year at the cooperative. Busy, but rewarding, because we're serving our members and the community. To give you a quick recap, we started this spring setting a record by awarding more than \$35,000 in grants to teachers in the

tri-county area through our Bright Ideas Education Grant program. We were able to raise this unprecedented amount thanks to the amazing community support of our Bright Ideas 5K, which has quickly become a highlight of the year for us at Berkeley Electric.

This past summer, we hosted a panel discussion at our headquarters to discuss the importance of keeping electricity affordable and reliable for families and businesses. We will talk more about this issue throughout the upcoming year as new factors influence both rates and power supply. As I have stated before, Berkeley Electric supports an all-of-the-above approach to our power supply, which includes a reasonable transition period to fully use renewables in a cost-effective way.

This fall our Annual Meeting also set an attendance record with 13,610 members voting to re-elect the three incumbent board trustees—Robert Vandross, District 1; Sam Gourdine, District 4; and Connie Shuler, District 7. We also experienced another first at this year's annual meeting with the winner of the grand prize, a 2010 Ford Escape, opting to donate the vehicle back to the cooperative. We would like to thank Frances Stork of Summerville for his generosity. The vehicle was donated, in turn, to Middleton's Village-to-Village Foundation in Awendaw which provides vehicles free-of-charge to residents without access to reliable transportation.

Speaking of Awendaw, we were excited to welcome members back to our newly remodeled district office. The office received an extensive remodel to better serve our members. Visitors to the district office can also take advantage of the unique covered parking structure, which has solar panels installed on top and is part of our community solar garden.

Our Goose Creek office was also renovated with the addition of a new covered materials storage facility. The covered storage not only protects valuable equipment from the elements but also allows the district to warehouse enough materials to keep up with growth. Goose Creek is our largest district, serving over half of the co-op's more than 120,000 meters.

The co-op's rapid growth is also affecting our other districts. Crews in Johns Island are upgrading Circuit 6 along Maybank Highway and plan to double capacity by adding an additional circuit. The project improves reliability and saves members money because we don't have to acquire or maintain additional land. Rounding out the projects was the Mill Branch substation, which was brought online last year in the Moncks Corner district to serve growth along the I-26 corridor and the Camp Hall industrial park.

Although this year already looks just as jam-packed, no matter how busy we get or what challenges arise, serving our members remains at the heart of what we do.

Sincerely,

\$2,500 scholarships available

HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS can now apply for part of the \$25,000 in scholarships offered through the Berkeley Electric Trust Board. Seniors whose parents are cooperative members have until the end of March to apply for one of ten scholarships, each worth \$2,500.

The scholarships are funded by the Operation Round Up program. Participating members agree to have their electric bill rounded up to the next highest dollar amount. Those funds are then used for scholarships, to support local non-profits and provide critical home repairs for fellow members.

Apply online at berkeleyelectric.coop before the application deadline of March 31. Grade and income requirements apply, and the scholarships will be awarded in May.

Apply now for teacher grants

IT'S TIME TO APPLY for our Bright Ideas Education Grant Program! Applications are being accepted now through the end of February and winners will be recognized during our Bright Ideas 5K celebration in May at Cypress Gardens.

The Bright Ideas program supports innovative and effective classroom education curriculum that cannot be covered by traditional school financing. Individual teachers can apply for grants up to \$1,000 while teams are eligible for up to \$1,500.

Teachers in public and private schools, K-12 in Berkeley Electric Cooperative's service area are eligible to participate. Grants are awarded for projects in any discipline and are designed to help teachers introduce innovative teaching methods. The grant application process is easy and can be completed online at berkeleyelectric.coop under the "My Community/Teachers & Students" menu.

BEC decreasing Power Cost Discount

INCREASED COSTS are prompting Berkeley Electric to gradually decrease the discount provided by the Power Cost Adjustment (PCA) line item during the first half of this year.

The PCA on your electric bill is used by the co-op to change revenue based on overall operating cost without affecting the energy or service charges. During the past decade, there have been few changes to this adjuster because of stable energy and materials costs. The co-op's costs have been increasing in the past year for wholesale energy, materials to build and maintain the distribution system, and borrowing interest costs.

BEC will continue to use the Power Cost Adjustment line item as a financial tool to collect only the revenue needed to maintain a financially healthy electric cooperative.

BRIGHT IDEAS 5K
BERKELEY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

MAY 4
CYPRESS GARDENS

ROMP
IN THE SWAMP
TO SUPPORT LOCAL
TEACHERS

SCAN FOR EARLY
BIRD SAVINGS

SCAN ME



SAM GOURDINE
Trustee, District 4

Reliable power for today and tomorrow

RINGING IN A NEW YEAR sparks a sense of renewed hope and optimism about the future. As a trustee of Berkeley Electric Cooperative, for me, it's a time to reflect on where we are and where we're going. At the heart of this reflection, I think about ways we can better serve you, the members of the cooperative.

The team at Berkeley Electric is always looking ahead, exploring ways to innovate and use new technologies to improve our services. As our nation increasingly relies on electricity to power the economy, keeping the lights on has never been more important. We're committed to powering—and empowering—our community at a cost local families and businesses can afford.

So how are we working to ensure reliable and affordable power while adapting to a changing energy landscape and our community's evolving needs?

One critical component of reliable power is the mix of energy resources used to generate the electricity that keeps the lights on across the Lowcountry. You may not realize it, but Berkeley Electric doesn't generate electricity. Instead, we purchase it from our energy provider, Central Electric Power Cooperative; and from there, we distribute it to homes and businesses throughout our community. Our current energy resource mix is made up of a variety of fuel sources including coal, natural gas and nuclear energy as well as renewable sources such as solar, hydro and biogas.

We're increasingly using more electricity generated from renewable energy sources, but we still depend on a diverse energy mix to ensure reliable power that's available to our members whenever they need it.



MARK ZAMORA | UNSPLASH.COM

In addition to managing a reliable energy mix, Berkeley Electric is using technology to enhance our local grid, limit service disruptions and improve outage response times.

Advanced metering technology, also known as AMI, enables two-way communication between the co-op and consumers. In the event of a power outage, AMI helps pinpoint the exact location of the outage and can even analyze damaged or tampered meters. AMI helps Berkeley Electric save money with real-time data, and ultimately improves power reliability for our entire community. Proactive tree trimming is another way we limit service disruptions.

As technological advancements become more accessible, we anticipate using advanced mapping software to better maintain our system and the environment while providing more reliable service. Berkeley is also using drone technology to inspect lines and substations to proactively detect hotspots, or overheating equipment, that could cause problems in the future.

However, one of the best methods for improving our services to you is our monitoring of trends and leading practices from other electric co-ops in South Carolina and across the country. Learning from other co-ops is one of the many benefits of the cooperative business model because for us, it's about cooperation, not competition.

As we turn our focus to 2024, Berkeley Electric Cooperative will continue working to provide the reliable, affordable electricity you expect and deserve—for today and tomorrow.

Sincerely,

BERKELEY AT-A-GLANCE	SEPTEMBER 2022	SEPTEMBER 2023
Total kWh sold	391,333,019	403,330,716
No. meters served	120,222	125,214
Avg. residential kWh/meter	1,360	1,135
Avg. residential bill/meter	\$186.47	\$162.69
Miles of line	6198	6341
Avg. daily high temperature	85	87
Avg. daily low temperature	68	68

Fuller selected for Furman Fellowship

MIKE FULLER, president and CEO of Berkeley Electric Cooperative, joins a network of more than 2,700 leaders committed to creating social and economic progress in South Carolina.

Fuller joins other distinguished leaders from across the state to participate in the Diversity Leaders Initiative (DLI), an award-winning program of Furman University's Riley Institute.

Now in its 20th year, the program equips participants with tools and perspectives to leverage diversity to improve organizational outcomes and drive social economic progress in South Carolina. Fuller is one of 42 individuals to be a part of the 17th Lowcountry cohort.

"Today's leaders have an obligation to drive change across our state that impacts all levels of society, improving outcomes for everyone," says Don Gordon, executive director of the Riley Institute. "This class offers participants the tools and experiences to understand the nuanced challenges facing diverse segments of our community and to develop meaningful solutions."

DLI class members are selected through a rigorous application and interview process after being nominated by existing graduates of the program, known as Riley Fellows. They are accepted based on a variety of factors, including their interest in and commitment to the program and their capacity to create impact within their organizations and communities. Each class is crafted to reflect South Carolina's demographic makeup.

Fuller will take part in a highly interactive curriculum consisting of case studies, scenario analyses and other experiential learning tools that maximize interaction and discussion among classmates and facilitate productive relationships. Working alongside classmates, Fuller will also develop a capstone project that raises awareness of community need.

DLI classes are facilitated by expert Juan Johnson, an independent consultant who was the Coca-Cola Company's first vice president for diversity strategy.

"DLI is unique among South Carolina's leadership programs," Johnson says. "In addition to developing new relationships and affecting positive change in their communities, participants gain deep knowledge of how to effectively manage and lead diverse workers, clients and constituents."

Once participants of this class graduate in December and become Riley Fellows, they join a powerful cross-sector network of South Carolinians that includes corporate CEOs, legislators, superintendents, religious, nonprofit leaders and community leaders.

"Each new class joins the powerful, statewide network of Riley Fellows, amplifying the impact of these leaders who are working together to make South Carolina a better, more equitable place for all its residents," Gordon says.

To see a full list of participants and for more information go to furman.edu/riley/diversity-strategies.

DIVERSITY LEADERS INITIATIVE LOWCOUNTRY CLASS XVII

Mike Fuller

Congratulations on being selected for the fall 2023 Lowcountry Diversity Leadership Initiative! We can't wait to see what skills and experiences you'll bring back to our team!



STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION

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To file a program alleging discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed complaint form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W. Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) Fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) Email: program.intake@usda.gov.

To reach Berkeley Electric Cooperative regarding this policy please contact Louise Meade, VP of Human Resources, at 843-761-8200 or louisem@bec.coop.

Ready for an experience you won't forget?

Your co-op has two amazing trips planned this summer. Juniors: Apply for the Washington Youth Tour. Sophomores: Apply for the Cooperative Youth Summit.

Juniors: Experience Washington, D.C., with hundreds of students from across South Carolina and the country, meeting lawmakers and touring all the sights. Your electric co-op will cover your round-trip plane ticket, tours and meals. In other words, it's all free!

Sophomores: Experience South Carolina's capital like never before. Tour the Statehouse, meet lawmakers and see how co-ops are preparing for our state's energy future. Plus, there's plenty of fun with visits to popular Columbia attractions like Riverbanks Zoo & Garden. Your electric co-op will cover all your expenses.

We've made it easy to apply for either FREE trip. Apply today!



ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES
OF SOUTH CAROLINA



Washington Youth Tour: June 15-20, 2024



Cooperative Youth Summit: July 15-18, 2024

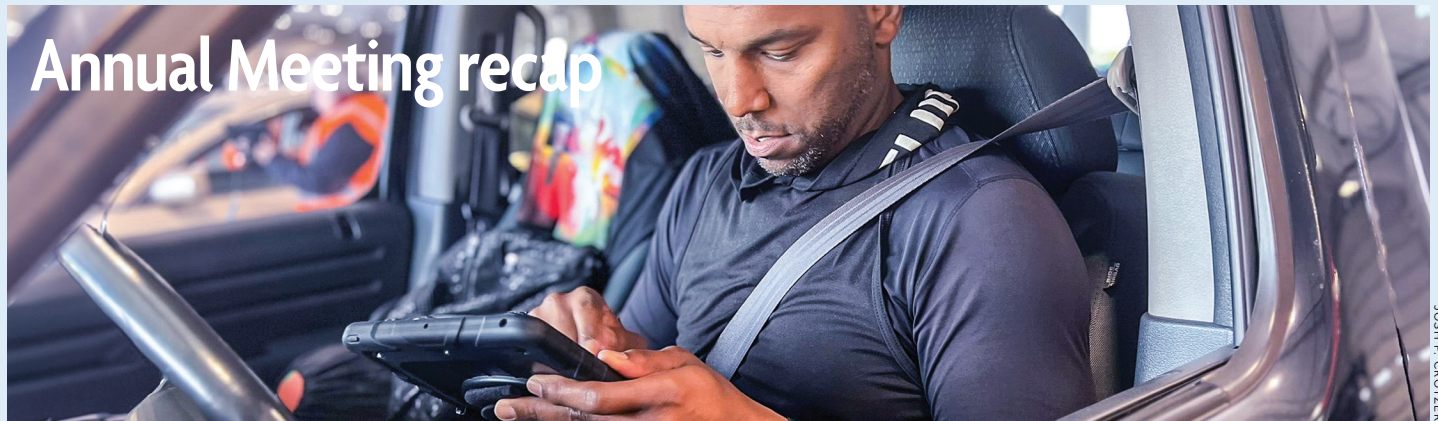


Applications available: berkeleyelectric.coop/youth-tour
Application Deadline: February 29, 2024



**Berkeley Electric
Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



JOSH P. CROTZER

Annual Meeting recap



BERKELEY ELECTRIC



WELL FOLKS—WE DID IT AGAIN. Berkeley Electric set a new record for attendance at this year's drive-thru annual meeting. It started off in Awendaw with our first voter, John Weston, and finished in Moncks Corner with Lakyshia Godfrey registering as our 13,610th voter. This was also the first time the co-op offered paperless voting with members using iPads to cast their votes electronically. Members re-elected Robert Vandross to represent District 1. Sam Gourdine, District 4 and Connie Shuler, District 7, ran unopposed.

We also had another first with Grand Prize winner, Frances Stork, opting to donate the 2010 Ford Escape to charity. Be sure to check out CEO Mike Fuller's column in this edition for a recap of important topics covered at this year's meeting.

Awendaw member John Weston kicked off our annual meeting while Lakyshia Godfrey closed it down in Moncks Corner right before the 7 p.m. deadline. Coincidentally, both members were registered by the same employee!



JOSH P. CROTZER

Four-year-old Logan Edwards admires this year's calendar after his dad, Patrick, swung by our Moncks Corner headquarters to cast his vote and receive a \$30 bill credit.



JOSH P. CROTZER

Member service rep Alisa Kentrus took time out to make sure Trixie got a treat for being a good girl after patiently waiting in line to vote with her owner.



CAR PHOTOS BY MICAH PONCE



Employees in Johns Island were treated to a classic car show as the nice weather prompted members to dust off their golden oldies and take them for a spin on the second day of voting.