

# Watts Working

## Share the Love with People Helping People

The “power of change” has been at work in Randolph EMC’s service territory since 2000, thanks to generous members and the People Helping People (PHP) program.

Our members volunteer to have their monthly electric bills rounded up to the next dollar, with the excess change going to help fellow members who have been met with a hardship that is outside of their control. Each participating member contributes an average of just \$6 per year (or about 50 cents per month).

By joining with their neighbors to put their pennies to work for fellow members, PHP participants have helped more than 850 cooperative families across Randolph, Moore, Montgomery, Chatham and Alamance counties since the program began.

PHP also recently established a separate Community Grants program made possible by funds received from CoBank’s Sharing Success matching grant program. Together with a matching donation from Randolph EMC, PHP is able to set aside this money from outside sources to support projects from local non-profit agencies that benefit REMC members.



A board of directors made up of seven volunteer REMC members reviews donation referrals and administers the funds for PHP. The money donated by members’ rounded-up bills goes directly to other members in need.

“PHP was born out of the true cooperative spirit of neighbors working together to help neighbors, and I am happy to serve the membership through the PHP board,” said Debra Vernon, PHP Board President. “I would love to see each and every Randolph Electric member sign up to participate. It’s just pennies a month that we’re donating, but together, we’re making a big difference in the lives of fellow members who are truly in need,” she added.

Participating in PHP is easy! You can opt into the program by visiting the Services section of your account on the online member service portal on [RandolphEMC.com](https://RandolphEMC.com) or call your local REMC office for assistance.

**B** Energy Tips for Renters

**C** Safety Tips for Winter Weather

**D** Staying Connected 24/7

**F** Dale Lambert’s AWARE Column

**H** Why to Love Electric Driving







## 4 Tips for Winter Safety

It's no surprise that winter months bring increased potential for fire risks and electrical safety hazards. This makes sense because during the coldest months, consumers are using additional electrical devices and appliances, like space heaters, electric blankets and portable generators.

The National Fire Protection Association estimates that 47,700 home fires occur each year in the U.S. due to electrical failure or malfunction. These fires result in 418 deaths, 1,570 injuries and \$1.4 billion in property damage annually. This winter, safeguard your loved ones and your home with these electrical safety tips from the Electrical Safety Foundation International.

### **Don't overload outlets.**

Overloaded outlets are a major cause of residential fires. Avoid using extension cords or multi-outlet converters for appliance connections — they should be plugged directly into a wall outlet. If you're relying heavily on extension cords in general, you may need additional outlets to address your needs. Contact

a qualified electrician to inspect your home and add new outlets.

### **Never leave space heaters unattended.**

If you're using a space heater, turn it off before leaving the room. Make sure heaters are placed at least three feet away from flammable items. It should also be noted that space heaters take a toll on your energy bills. If you're using them throughout your home, it may be time to upgrade your home heating system.

**Inspect heating pads and electric blankets.** These items cause nearly 500 fires every year. Electric blankets that are more than 10 years old create additional risks for a fire hazard. Inspect your electric blankets and heating pads — look for dark, charred or

frayed spots, and make sure the electrical cord is not damaged.

Do not place any items on top of a heating pad or electric blanket, and never fold them when in use.

### **Use portable generators safely.**

Unfortunately, winter storms can cause prolonged power outages, which means many consumers will use portable generators to power their homes. Never connect a standby generator into your home's electrical system. For portable generators, plug appliances directly into the outlet provided on the generator. Start the generator first, before you plug in appliances. Run it in a well-ventilated area outside your home. The carbon monoxide it generates is deadly, so keep it away from your garage, doors, windows and vents.

# 3 Steps to Being Winter Storm Ready

## Update contact information

on your Randolph EMC account with cell numbers and email addresses to make sure you receive important communications during storms. Then, take a moment to follow Randolph EMC on Facebook & Twitter so you'll already be set

to see latest regarding outages and other storm impacts.

**Create an emergency supply kit** with essentials like blankets, a flashlight, batteries, food, water, medications and first aid items. In addition, make a family communications plan that details what you'll do in

case of emergency...and don't forget to include your pets!

**Keep cell phones and any battery powered devices charged.** Make sure you have alternative charging methods for your phone or any device that requires power.



## 2 Alerts That Can Save You BIG

### High Usage Alert

Determine how much electricity you normally use in a day and set a notification when you exceed that amount. Higher usage could be attributed to the weather or increased activity in your home, but it could mean a malfunction or problem with an appliance.

### Due Date Reminder

Get a reminder when your bill is due to avoid late charges and past-due balances.

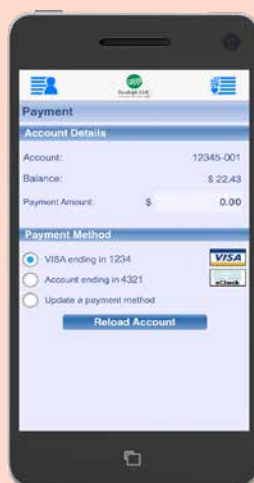
### To set up alerts:

- Log in to your account on Randolph EMC's Online Member Service Portal
- Click on the My Alerts tab
- Confirm the contact information to receive alerts for your account
- Select the method of communication you prefer for each alert — text, email or push notification

## 1 Way to Stay Connected to REMC 24/7

The Randolph EMC Mobile App is designed to give you fast, secure account access so you can easily manage your account details wherever, whenever:

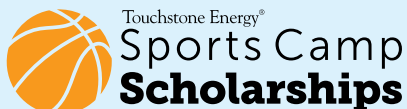
- View your bill or your FlexPay account balance
- Make an immediate payment or find payment locations
- View energy usage
- Schedule alerts and reminders
- Access the Outage Map and Facebook and Twitter pages



Nearly everything you can do from our online member service portal can be handled instantly on your phone.

To use the mobile app, first create a login to the online member service portal at [RandolphEMC.com](http://RandolphEMC.com). Then, download the Randolph EMC mobile app

from the App Store or Google Play and sign in with those credentials!



## Apply for a Scholarship to Attend Basketball Camp for Free this Summer!

Attention middle school basketball players! Randolph EMC is now accepting applications for 2020 Touchstone Energy Sports Camp Scholarships from rising sixth, seventh and eighth graders. Scholarship winners will attend overnight basketball camps at UNC-Chapel Hill and N.C. State University for free this summer!

To learn more about the program or to download the application, go to [RandolphEMC.com/SportsCamp](https://RandolphEMC.com/SportsCamp).

## DO NOT TAMPER WITH YOUR ELECTRIC METER

Meter tampering can result in electric shock, is illegal and increases electricity rates for other co-op members.



- ❌ Never break a meter seal.
- ❌ Never open a meter base.
- ❌ Never remove a meter or alter an entrance cable in any manner.

If you know or suspect that someone has tampered with their meter, please contact us immediately.

## Remember—

While automated meters have greatly reduced the need to be on members' properties, it is necessary to periodically check cooperative equipment and perform maintenance to ensure reliable electricity. These inspections are required by the National Electrical Safety Code.

Randolph Electric or a contractor authorized by the cooperative conducts regular inspections of service facilities. If you ever have a doubt about someone on your property, please don't hesitate to contact us directly at 1-800-672-8212 for confirmation.

# A Word About Randolph Electric

From CEO Dale Lambert

## SURVEY SAYS...PART SIX

Dear Members,

This month's article is part 6 of a series of AWARE columns that have their roots in a survey members completed in June of last year. We have covered a lot of ground and topics together and my hope is that the articles have been informative and thought-provoking. If you would like to review past columns and do not have previous copies of Carolina Country available, please visit our website, [RandolphEMC.com](https://RandolphEMC.com), and click on the News Center tab.

I get it...most people don't think too much about the fine details of their electric utility. That's certainly to be expected. But most people, *unlike you*, are not owners of their electric utility. Since we are a member-owned cooperative, I feel a commitment to provide information and details on important issues and industry trends that could impact you.

As indicated at last month's conclusion, this month we are looking at an emerging technology that would dramatically—and I believe positively—impact the electric utility industry. That technology is storing energy in batteries.

In the December AWARE column, when we looked at the characteristics of the solar generation on Randolph EMC's system, the data showed that,

due to the obvious dependence upon sunlight, solar provides zero contribution to the highest power demand in the early morning hours during the winter. Even in the summer, when we reach our afternoon peak around 6:00 p.m., the sun is setting in the sky and solar generation is ramping down. We need more reliable generation resources to keep the lights on.

Currently, electricity is used the instant it's generated. But what if we could generate electricity using several different resources during off-peak times, store it and use the stored energy during peak times, when members are using the most power for the day? This makes electricity generation, transmission and distribution much more efficient.

In order to keep the power flowing, generation, transmission and distribution facilities must be constructed at a level that meets the highest possible peak of demand from our members, which is normally the coldest winter morning or the hottest summer afternoon. If not, the system would be overloaded and result in the loss of power.

I am optimistic that the advancements and declining cost of battery storage will result in savings on our wholesale generation costs.

As shown in our annual report last year, wholesale power generation made up approximately 57 percent of our costs—by far the largest bucket in our cost structure. Increasing efficiency within this bucket would have the most impact on keeping our member's power bills affordable.

The battery storage concept has been around a long time, but it has not been a viable solution to consider because of high cost. However, in the last few years, the cost has declined significantly due to advancements in battery technology, improved chemistry and ramped-up production. The increasing production of electric



vehicles is contributing to this positive development. Just look at how we all have benefited from the advancements of batteries in our lap top computers, smart phones and even our flashlights in our everyday lives. None of us want to go back to the old heavy and dim six-volt battery flashlights of yesteryear.

A few Randolph EMC members have already installed solar generation with battery storage at their homes. Those who contacted us after their installation missed out on added value for them, though, because their system design does not allow the use of the battery during a peak control period.

We want to work with members who are willing to go to the expense of installing one of these systems to save them, and all our members, as much money as possible. If you are considering installing a solar and battery system, please contact us to discuss possibilities of participating in a pilot program to test out the value of residential batteries as a back up electricity source for power outages and for peak demand control. My opinion is, once the tax benefit for installing solar goes away (unless Congress extends it) and battery costs continue to decline, there will not be a need for the additional cost of solar for a battery installation to be viable. Under an incentive rate, the battery can be charged economically using low and zero CO2 emissions resources during non-peak times during the night, much like Randolph EMC's PlugN2Savings electric vehicle rate.

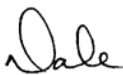
As I mentioned earlier, significant research is occurring on battery storage—one of which is located on the Randolph EMC system. It is the home of REMC member, Mr. Harvey Harman, who lives in the Bear Creek community and is the Director of Construction and Land

Acquisition/Development for Chatham Habitat for Humanity. This nationally significant test project involved several partners, including Oak Ridge National Laboratory and, Spiers NewTechnologies, and was funded by the U.S. Department of Energy. Included are some pictures of this project.

The goal of this project was to test the capability of installing battery storage on Habitat for Humanity homes to reduce their energy cost. The storage component for this project used batteries from electric vehicles that were no longer viable for that application. This helped reduce the cost of the project, while also providing value by creating a second life for the batteries. This project tested the concept on how an incentive rate provided by the electric utility could reduce cost for the homeowner, and all the utility members. The initial results were very positive, but in order for battery storage to become mainstream, it all hinges on declining cost. I believe this will continue to occur.

It's an exciting future for our industry with all the new possibilities. I will continue to share advancements occurring within the industry and on the Randolph EMC system. In fact, there are some battery storage projects in the pipeline that will hopefully be online in 2020. Through it all, our goal will remain the same—to bring value to you as member-owners through the advancements of technology, just like we have done in the past.

Cooperatively Yours,



Dale F. Lambert  
Chief Executive Officer



Randolph Electric Membership Corporation provides safe and reliable power with exceptional value to more than 32,000 member accounts in Randolph, Moore, Montgomery, Chatham and Alamance counties.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

### Electric Service

Asheboro ..... (336) 625-5177  
..... (800) 672-8212

Robbins: ..... (910) 948-3401  
..... (800) 868-7014

Report Outage ..... (877) REMC-OFF  
..... (877) 736-2633

Account Info  
& Bill Payments: ..... (877) 534-2319  
Business Hours: ..... 8 am – 5 pm, M-F

### Board of Directors

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Visit Randolph EMC Online  
**RandolphEMC.com**



# Great Reasons to Love Driving Electric

Whether your priority is saving money, increasing convenience, helping the environment or experiencing the latest technology, electric vehicles offer something for everyone.



**Significant \$ savings.** Powering a car with electricity is cheaper than powering it with gas, so electric vehicles cost less to run. In addition, Randolph EMC offers a special rate to EV drivers who charge their cars overnight, which can lead to even more savings. EVs are becoming increasingly affordable to purchase, and tax incentives and rebates can also help reduce their price tag. Visit the Electric Vehicles section of [RandolphEMC.com](https://RandolphEMC.com) to see how much you could save by driving electric.

**More convenience.** Imagine never having to go to the gas station again! Most EV drivers charge overnight at home, and Randolph EMC offers a rebate for installing a Level 2 home charger. A growing network of public charging stations also make it increasingly convenient to charge your EV no matter where you're headed.

**Less maintenance.** Because EVs tend to have fewer moving parts than gasoline-powered vehicles, they require no oil changes and less maintenance, which can help you save both time and money. EVs

also offer regenerative braking, which means they convert the energy lost while braking into stored energy that can be used later, so their brake systems are more efficient and last longer than those of conventional vehicles.

**A better driving experience.** Electric vehicles are fun to drive, with faster acceleration and a more responsive, zippy feel behind the wheel that offers faster pickup and improved turning power. They are quieter than gasoline-powered cars and come in an increasing range of models and sleek design options that allow you to experience the latest technology.

**A healthier environment.** Plug-in electric vehicles have zero tailpipe emissions, which improves air quality and benefits us all. Even when accounting for generation of the electricity that powers EVs, emissions are lower than those of traditional vehicles. Even better news for you, more than half of the power that comes to you from Randolph EMC already comes from emissions-free sources, stacking the value of driving electric.

## **A stronger local economy.**

Electric vehicles decrease our dependence on foreign oil and encourage local economic development. The installation of charging stations can help promote tourism and commerce as EV drivers are drawn to the communities surrounding the stations.

**A more efficient electric grid.** By charging overnight, electric vehicles create demand for power at a time when the grid has historically been most underutilized and therefore least efficient. Electricity is most expensive when demand is highest and spreading demand across more hours of the day helps flatten those expensive peaks.

Randolph EMC's REVUP program offers EV owners even more savings! Participants receive a \$500 rebate towards a Level 2 charger and a special time-of-use PlugN2Savings rate that rewards members for charging their vehicles during non-peak times. Visit [RandolphEMC.com/REVUP](https://RandolphEMC.com/REVUP) to learn more!