



For All Your Customer Service Needs,  
Call Toll-Free (800) 240-3400

**Automated Outage Reporting**  
1-888-BLURIDGE  
www.blueridge.coop

**Pickens**  
P.O. Box 277  
734 West Main St.  
Pickens, SC 29671

**Oconee**  
P.O. Box 329  
2328 Sandifer Blvd.  
Highway 123  
Westminster, SC 29693

**Anderson**  
1212 North Fant St.  
Anderson, SC 29622

**Greenville**  
3751 Highway 11  
Travelers Rest, SC 29690

**Mission Statement**  
Blue Ridge will be a competitive, quality provider of energy and other services, maintaining its history of integrity and adapting to the challenges of a changing world. While exercising leadership in the community, the organization's focus will be on exceeding customer expectations.

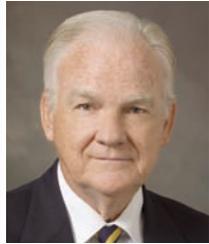
**Board of Directors**  
Jimmy Lee Dodgens, *Chairman*  
Franklin M. Looper, Jr.,  
*Vice Chairman*  
Kenneth G. Southerlin, *Secretary*  
J. Mendel Stone, *Treasurer*  
J. Bill Barker  
Ben G. Bolt  
Joel Spencer Dalton, Jr.  
Joel R. Davis  
William G. Elrod



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

## Levelized Billing offers benefits

**DECEMBER 2010 WAS** the fifth-coldest December for this area since record-keeping first began in the 1880s. As I prepare this report, January is off to a cold start as well.



Last winter, last summer, and now this winter have all provided ample proof that weather in this part of South Carolina is prone to temperature extremes. Those extreme temperatures can—and do—put significant upward pressure on energy use and electric bills.

By contrast, spring and autumn are typically pleasant, mild seasons with correspondingly lower energy consumption. For most Blue Ridge members, electric bills during these two seasons are considerably smaller than those we send out in the hot and cold months.

### 'Peaks' and 'valleys'

If we were to plot on a graph a normal year-long kilowatt-hour billing cycle, the line would be characterized by two distinct "peaks" (winter months and summer months) and two equally distinct "valleys" (spring and fall). Those wide variations can tend to work a hardship on more than a few household budgets.

The ideal solution would be to lower those peaks and then fill in the valleys. That would make those monthly power bills much more predictable and manageable.

### Levelized payment schedule

Fortunately, the cooperative has just such a means to that end. We call it Levelized Billing. In a nutshell, Levelized Billing computes a rolling average of the previous 12 months of a member's electricity invoices. That average would be the sum the member would pay each month. In essence, the member's payment schedule is levelized because there would be only a small change from month to month in the amount due.

Many Blue Ridge members are already taking advantage of Levelized Billing. You can learn more about this program by calling the cooperative's customer service center, inquiring online, or stopping by any of our offices. Our customer service representatives are eager to assist those who might be interested.

**Charles E. Dalton**  
*President and CEO*

## Winter gets early start, pushing heating costs up



DENISE MCCORMICK

Snow blanketed upstate South Carolina in early January. Blue Ridge personnel as well as outside contractors gather early to prepare for any outage problems.

**WINTER GOT THE JUMP** on South Carolina this season, pushing temperatures down and electricity bills up in an early cold snap. Then our region experienced “Snowstorm 2011” a period of snow, freezing rain and temperatures in the teens.

Blue Ridge Operations Manager Sam McMillan had all crews and a number of contractors ready to go on Monday morning, but the soft, dry snow left power lines untouched for the most part. “We were thrilled that almost no one had to be without power during this storm. All of our folks came in early and were ready to go, but the calls never came. Fewer than 200 people had problems during this storm.”

However, the cold that had plagued the area in December came back following the storm. Mike Carson, energy specialist for Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative, reminds members that

weather—extremely hot or cold—is usually a key driver in power bills. “The colder it gets, the harder and longer heating systems must run—and the more energy they use,” Carson says. “Also, the water flowing into your water heater is colder. That means the water heater uses more electricity to heat the water and keep it hot.” Additionally, families tend to spend more time indoors during chilly weather, creating further opportunities for increased electricity usage.

Heating and cooling typically represent about 50 percent of a typical home’s energy use. Be sure to set thermostats at 68 degrees or lower, properly maintain heating units and replace filters frequently. More energy-saving tips as well as an online energy audit can be found at [blueridge.coop](http://blueridge.coop). For programs that will help you manage your energy use, contact us at (800) 240-3400.

### Prescription savings top \$4 million in S.C.

South Carolina co-op members led the nation in pharmacy savings with their Co-op Connections discount card, Touchstone Energy reported in early December.

Members of S.C. electric co-ops have saved more than \$4 million on prescriptions since the Co-op Connections was introduced in 2007. Touchstone Energy, the nationwide co-op alliance that coordinates the program, reports that Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative members have now saved \$638,000.

The Co-op Connections card is good for 10 to 60 percent discounts on prescription drugs at more than 60,000 national and regional pharmacy chain stores as well as local pharmacies. Find participating pharmacy locations at [locateproviders.com](http://locateproviders.com).



### A name, a dance, a legend

Chubby Checker will be headlining the 2011 Blue Ridge Fest on Friday night, May 13, singing his 1960 hit, “The Twist.” The sensational ’60s star is celebrating the 50th

anniversary of his history-making single. Hailed as the most successful single of all times, “The Twist” has the distinction of hitting No. 1 twice, a feat still unequalled five decades later.

This Rock ’n’ Roll giant revolutionized dance forever in just a couple of minutes on American Bandstand when he first showed the world how to “Dance Apart to the Beat.” If you remember when the Flintstones first arrived on TV and the Etch-A-Sketch fascinated kids everywhere, then you will not want to miss the opportunity to see Chubby Checker.

Blue Ridge Fest will once again be making donations to Upstate charities through this employee-sponsored event. Last year, proceeds of \$151,000 brought the Fest’s 13-year total giving to \$1.2 million. Blue Ridge President and CEO Charles Dalton is excited about this year’s entertainment. “We are so fortunate to be able to have Chubby Checker here, live in Pickens, for our event. He is still very active in the music world and will be performing his legendary ’60s hits as well as hits from the ’80s and ’90s. People young and old know about ‘The Twist’, so I hope everyone will be with us as we relive those early years with Chubby Checker.”



Chubby Checker