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**FOR ALL YOUR CUSTOMER SERVICE NEEDS**

Call Toll-Free (800) 240-3400

**AUTOMATED OUTAGE REPORTING**

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**PICKENS**

P.O. Box 277  
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Pickens, SC 29671

**OCONEE**

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

**MISSION STATEMENT**

Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative will operate as a competitive provider of energy services and a partner with local communities, with a focus on safety, service and integrity.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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Jim Lovinggood

This organization is an equal-opportunity provider.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

## Broadband survey to be forwarded to all members



**NEXT AUGUST**, Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative will celebrate its 80th birthday. On the date Blue Ridge was chartered, fewer than three percent of South Carolina farms were receiving central-station electric power. To their credit, the cooperative's founders were determined to extend this essential service throughout the Upstate's rural areas. Today, more than 7,100 miles of line bring power to our 67,000 members.

We believe that rural residents, whenever feasible, should be recipients of services on par with those readily available to consumers who reside within municipalities. The cost of supplying electricity was, and still is, a much more capital-intensive service than that provided to more-populated areas. This cost of service has to be distributed among fewer consumers per mile of power line. Plus, the upkeep of the cooperative's rural system requires a higher level of day-to-day maintenance and is much more susceptible to storm damage. Yet—despite the odds—Blue Ridge provides the best service in the Upstate in our opinion.

Today, it seems apparent that a large majority of folks view broadband internet service to be indispensable in much the same way electricity was regarded in the 1930s and '40s. More and more co-ops across the nation are now investing in the delivery of high-speed internet to their members' homes. Unsurprisingly, we've been fielding inquiries from a number of you about the possibility of Blue Ridge pursuing this business. As one member commented, "Viable internet access isn't a luxury anymore; it's a necessity."

The cooperative conducted a recent limited survey of our members and received strong, positive feedback

regarding this subject. Based on this feedback, Blue Ridge has decided to study the possibility of taking broadband to the rural areas where our members live. After all, the cooperative is a member-owned power supplier. Since we're not profit-driven like investor-owned utilities, our number-one motivation is to create value and improve living standards for our members.

We recognize the challenge involved in pursuing such a project. Realistically, it's estimated that we'd be looking at a three-to-five-year process to build out our entire service area with broadband facilities. Also to be taken into consideration would be the vast geographical footprint that makes up the Blue Ridge service territory. In addition to being primarily rural, more than half of that sprawling territory is classified as mountainous.

Our first step will be to collect information from our membership. That will take the form of a new survey that's to be sent out this month to every location now receiving service from Blue Ridge. You can assist us by answering and returning the survey. Based on replies to that questionnaire, a decision will then be made about the cooperative's next move.

Again, Blue Ridge is only getting started. We're looking at potential business models and at the investment that would be needed to provide this service. The process of studying broadband will be thorough and will take some time. We hope you'll respond to the survey with your thoughts, and you have our guarantee that we'll continue to update you on our progress.

**JIM LOVINGGOOD**  
President and CEO

# Blue Ridge Energy Services is here for you



Solar panels are becoming more visible throughout our area. But are they right for you? Contact Blue Ridge Energy Services with all your questions (800) 240-3400.

staffed with well-trained and knowledgeable employees many of whom are certified in their specialty.

One particular topic we have taken special interest in is solar energy. Interest in this renewable continues to grow in our area, and more members are looking at solar as an alternative source for energy. As one of 20 electric co-ops in South Carolina, Blue Ridge currently has 416 individual solar systems in operation at members' homes. With numerous companies and promotions being offered, it is difficult to know who you can trust.

In an effort to help members with that decision, Blue Ridge Electric works alongside a reputable solar company to provide service and installation of rooftop solar. There are many factors to consider when deciding whether or not a solar system is right for your home such as price and even the roof's alignment with the sun's path. Having Blue Ridge Energy Services as your go-to, those decisions can be made with more confidence.

So whatever your energy question, Blue Ridge Energy Services is here for you. Visit [blueridge.coop](http://blueridge.coop) for more information and to stay up-to-date on renewable energy options.

**LAST AUGUST WE** introduced a new department at Blue Ridge Electric Co-op to address the growing need for concise and trustworthy information on a number of energy related products. Blue Ridge Energy Services was created to offer expertise to our members on things such as solar systems, battery storage, emergency generators, geothermal technology, and electric vehicles. This department is

## 30 Days of Winter Savings starts in October

It's hard to believe that winter is just around the corner. In our part of South Carolina, winters can be harsh with cold temperatures, coupled with ice and snow. Since a big portion of your power bill is associated with heating costs, now is a good time to think about ways you can prepare your home for winter.

Beginning October 1, we're going to offer a series of energy saving tips: **30 Days of Winter**



**30 Days of**  
*Winter*  
**SAVINGS**

*Small Changes, Big Results!*

**Savings—Small Changes, Big Results.** Tips will be offered daily on Facebook and on our website. If you miss a day, the list can be seen on our web page.

Many of these tips were part of our summer series for saving money throughout your home. Once you've made an energy saving improvement, chances are you will continue to benefit year-round. And as the tagline says, small changes can bring big results.

One of the most important things you can do for free is download the Blue Ridge app on your cellphone or other device. Most meters now record daily usage, and by logging on to your account, you can see what is happening at your

location everyday. That way, you're the first to know when that winter bill starts to rise, and you can make adjustments then, rather than when a higher bill comes at the end of the month.

Another option you might consider is levelized or budget billing. By paying either an equal amount (budget) or average (levelized) bill each month, there are no surprises in colder months. Your payment will be fixed or fluctuate just a small amount.

Please contact us for more information on how Blue Ridge can make your winter stress free. Also, follow us during the month of October and get prepared for whatever Mother Nature has in store for us this winter.



## PUBLIC AUCTION

**Saturday, November 9,  
10 a.m.**

**Preview:**  
Friday, November 8,  
9 a.m.-2 p.m.

**Location:**  
Blue Ridge Electric  
Cooperative, Inc.  
Equipment Facility  
734 West Main Street,  
Pickens, SC

**VEHICLES**  
**A limited selection of  
miscellaneous supplies**  
Office furniture and  
equipment, combo  
winch mounts, truck  
tool boxes and computer  
products

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add or delete items

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