



[www.blueridge.coop](http://www.blueridge.coop)

**FOR ALL YOUR CUSTOMER SERVICE NEEDS**

Call Toll-Free (800) 240-3400

**AUTOMATED OUTAGE REPORTING**

1-888-BLURIDGE

**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

**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

## Looking out for member privacy



**IN TODAY'S FAST-PACED,** technologically saturated world, many of us are becoming more informed about the necessity of guarding our individual privacy. Frequent reports in the news media feature troubling stories of both individuals and organizations who have been

scammed by unscrupulous criminals. These unsolicited contacts can originate here at home or in a foreign country.

At the same time, there are also instances where, unbeknownst to their clientele, legitimate businesses have passed along personal data to other parties. Just recently, there was a news account of an electric utility in South Carolina that had been selling its customer information without those customers' knowledge or permission. The utility has since informed its ratepayers that it had ceased that practice.

### Uneasy thoughts

When I heard about that matter, I immediately wondered if our Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative members might be having some uneasy thoughts of their own. If that should be the case, I want to take this opportunity to set everyone's mind at ease.

In our nearly 80 years of operation, the cooperative has always been careful to safeguard our members' privacy. Not too long after Blue Ridge was chartered in 1940, an Upstate appliance dealer asked for the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of our entire membership. The cooperative's management at that time wisely and politely turned down that request, and that has served as an ironclad policy here ever since.

### The cutting edge of prevention

On another front, Blue Ridge is employing every known technological action to ensure that your electric-account information doesn't become compromised. Experts in the field of computer science tell us there's no foolproof means of countering every online attack that might come along. However, you can be certain that the cooperative is striving to stay on the cutting edge of prevention when it comes to the security of our members' records.

We're frequently made aware of calls our members receive from persons impersonating Blue Ridge employees. You can be sure that we'll never call and demand that payments be made at a third-party site, or that you purchase gift cards to pay your bill. Should you get a suspicious call regarding your account, contact the local sheriff's office and then let us know. We'll send that information out to other members through social media, since these attacks are often targeted to just one area or co-op.

The fact that Blue Ridge is a member-owned power supplier means that we're especially focused on looking out for you and your interests. Your board of directors, my fellow employees, and I are all firmly committed to the co-op business model. That means serving you well is a preeminent concern. It's a commitment that extends to every aspect of our work, including the protection of the personal business you carry on with Blue Ridge.

**JIM LOVINGGOOD**  
 President and CEO

### Upcoming Events

**Co-op Annual Meeting**—Thursday, April 23 featuring Gold City

**Blue Ridge Fest**—Friday, May 1 with Ronnie Milsap, Restless Heart and The Tams

## Go Geo: It's greenest of the green—and cost-effective, too!

**ARE YOU LOOKING** for a “green” technology for your home’s heating and cooling? What about a system that can save you up to 70% on your heating, cooling, and hot water costs? No, it’s not solar—it’s geothermal.

While our area sees a huge fluctuation in temperatures from summer to winter, the temperature below ground, regardless of the season, stays fairly consistent all year. The temperature just a few feet below the earth’s surface stays at an average 55°–70°F, making it perfect for the operation of an energy efficient geothermal heat pump system. Key to this appliance’s operation is a loop of fluid-filled pipe that can be buried either vertically or horizontally on the member’s property. The loop circulates water to move heat energy to and from your home. It’s the heart of a geothermal system and its biggest advantage over ordinary heat pumps, air conditioners, and fossil fuel furnaces. The type of loop is based on available space, ground composition, and installation costs for specific areas.

Most importantly, geothermal systems can save you up to 70% on your heating, cooling, and hot water costs. Does saving money with the greenest, most efficient, most cost-effective heat and cooling unit sound appealing to you? It did to Blue Ridge Co-op member Jason Cass. When looking for a new heating and cooling system, the geo-thermal unit by WaterFurnace grabbed his attention.



“I read about the efficiency of the unit and then learned about all the rebates being offered. It was the right decision for me. The process was simple and the installation was much like any other heating system except for the loop process. We’ve only had the system a few months, but it’s worked great. The air is warmer than from a conventional heat pump and we’re very satisfied.”

Blue Ridge is partnering with several WaterFurnace geothermal heat pump dealers to facilitate installation of these systems. Right now, there are a number of rebates and tax incentives available, making the cost of a geothermal unit

very attractive. The Blue Ridge package includes:

- ▶ A rebate of \$1,600.00/ton (installed by a participating dealer)
- ▶ Blue Ridge Electric on-bill financing @ 6.5% for up to 7 years for qualifying members

These, along with federal and state tax credits, make this an affordable option to heat and cool your home for years to come.

Visit [blueridge.coop/gogeo](http://blueridge.coop/gogeo) for more information and the answer to additional questions or call (800) 240-3400.

# TAPP your energy!

*Make Life Easier with the Blue Ridge Mobile App. Available for Apple and Android devices.*

