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**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.

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This organization is an  
equal-opportunity provider.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



## Adequate baseload generating facilities are crucial

**FOR MANY OF US**, the July heatwave might have made the near-zero temperatures we experienced last Christmas seem like a distant memory. From our vantage point at Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative, however, both weather-driven events have invited our ongoing scrutiny.

Fortunately, the Blue Ridge system, and those of other South Carolina power suppliers, had adequate capacity to meet the demand brought on by the recent scorching temperatures. The December cold snap presented us with a different scenario. The size of the winter electrical load meant some neighboring utilities had to resort to rolling blackouts to maintain system integrity.

### A prolonged interruption of service

I can assure you, it was a very tense situation as we watched thermometer readings drop into the single digits. At Blue Ridge, we understood that a prolonged interruption of service could endanger lives and health among those we serve. Honestly, I hope we won't have to go through that kind of ordeal again.

In analyzing how we've arrived at these challenging circumstances, two main factors come to my mind. First, South Carolina's population is expanding rapidly. A recent survey revealed that among America's 50 states, ours is the fifth-fastest growing. Moreover, announcements of new industries locating within our state's borders are now common. It's also obvious that the state's many attributes are attracting more families who desire to make the state their new home.

With these new additions, there comes the expectation that adequate electric-power supplies will be available to meet their needs. Government regulations—particularly federal regulations—are

restricting our options for adding baseload generating facilities. Some in-state coal-fueled plants have already been shut down, and proposed regulations may restrict the operation of our natural-gas generators as well. The intent appears to be for fossil-fuel plants to cease their production, regardless of whether there will be adequate replacement power to come online to fill the void.

Looking to renewables such as solar and wind to fill that void is, in my opinion, simply not adequate. All of us expect the lights, the TV, or the computer to come on every time we flip the switch. Dependence on renewables would make that uncertain. Additionally, the failure of the V. C. Summer nuclear project has shifted dependence even more to natural gas-fueled generating stations to guarantee that consumers will have reliable electric service.

Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative isn't opposed to renewable energy. The co-op is the owner of a solar farm, and we have assisted quite a few of our members who have installed solar panels at their premises. However, the fact remains that renewables have limitations. Solar cannot provide support when additional generation is desperately needed around the clock.

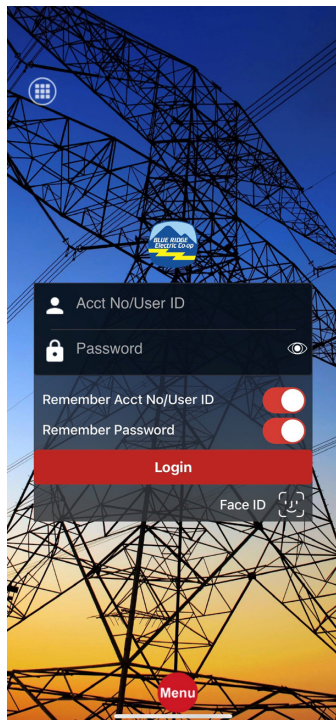
I am in favor of balanced resources in our national energy strategy. However, that strategy should ensure energy independence, economic prosperity, affordability and reliability to every citizen. At Blue Ridge, we will continue to be a voice for our members as we look toward the future.

**JIM LOVINGGOOD**  
President and CEO

## Information at your fingertips

IN THE ERA of smart technology, staying informed about your energy use has never been more essential. We are thrilled to unveil the latest version of our free BREC Mobile App, a powerful tool designed to empower you with real-time insights and enhanced control over your energy use.

We've revamped the layout to ensure that you can effortlessly access all the app's features and functionalities. Creating a user account, paying your utility bills, setting alerts and reporting an outage are now more convenient than ever. Whether you're at home, work, or on the go, our app's enhanced security and account management features enable you to take charge of your energy use like never before.



Once you have established your User ID and Password, a complete analysis of your account is available. With the new menu button at the bottom of the page, navigation is simple and quick. Download or update the app today.

## You can be a winner too!

**CONGRATULATIONS** to Blue Ridge Electric members Betty Berry and Martha James. Berry is the Grand Prize winner of a \$500 gift card and James is the co-op winner of a \$100 gift card after volunteering for the Beat The Peak program.

Beat The Peak asks participants to shift the time they use electricity from peak times, when demand for power is high, to off-peak times, when others aren't using as much electricity. Have you joined? Sign up today by visiting [blueridge.coop](http://blueridge.coop). You could be the next winner.



Betty Berry received a \$500 gift card when her name was chosen from new Beat The Peak participants.

AMANDA MACHEN

**JOIN TODAY** **VCP** **Voices for Cooperative Power**  
United for Stronger Communities

**MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR YOUR CO-OP AND JOIN VCP!**

**VCP is a network of electric co-op members working together to influence public policy decisions that impact our co-ops and our way of life.**

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## Help us shape the future of energy

**AMERICA'S ENERGY SYSTEM** is undergoing a fundamental transformation. Much of the focus related to energy issues in Washington is on large utilities in urban areas. But electric cooperatives are different. Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative is owned by its members, and we care about the future of your family and our communities.

Blue Ridge works hard to recognize and meet the needs of your family and neighbors to provide affordable, reliable power to the communities we serve. But energy affordability and reliability mean different things to different communities. Members living in the most rural areas of America have a different set of challenges than members in more populated areas.

Elected officials need to hear from their constituents about the issues that matter to them to make decisions regarding what is best for those they represent—their constituents. By building relationships with our representatives, we can influence the outcome of public policy debates that affect the way cooperatives operate. This is why Blue Ridge Electric is partnering with the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) to make it easier for members to join the discussion and let our voices be heard.

Voices for Cooperative Power (VCP) is a new nationwide community designed to help co-op members like you share your story with elected officials. We know that one size doesn't fit all when it comes to energy policies. As an electric cooperative member, speaking up on issues that impact your electric co-op sends a message to elected officials about the needs of our communities—and their constituencies. VCP makes it easy to have a say in policy decisions that impact you.

VCP members will receive updates on important issues and, when needed, information on how to contact elected officials and government agencies on proposed legislation or regulations.

It's quick and easy to join VCP. Simply visit [voicesforcooperativepower.com](http://voicesforcooperativepower.com) or check out Voices for Cooperative Power on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram (@voices4coops).

We cannot shape the future of energy at Blue Ridge and across the United States without your input. Co-ops have democracy built into their business models, so we encourage you to use your voice to help ensure that Blue Ridge Electric can continue to provide reliable, affordable energy to consumer-members like you for generations to come.