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Automated Outage System

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David Altman
President and CEO

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Remote Payment Sites

Chesterfield
Piggly Wiggly Market of Chesterfield
1303 West Boulevard
Chesterfield, SC

Jefferson
The General Store
360 N. Harold Ingram Hwy.
Jefferson, SC

Kershaw
Quality Appliance
407 South Hampton Street
Kershaw, SC

Lancaster
The Energy Center, Inc.
667 Lancaster Bypass 9 E
Lancaster, SC

In line for savings

Putting 'members first' for
appliance rebates, beginning March 31



WE CONSTANTLY SEEK ways to help our members manage energy costs. A recent example is the Help My House home energy-efficiency initiative.



Our latest effort is helping the State Energy Office get the word out about the upcoming Energy Efficient Appliance Rebate program. We want Lynches River Electric Cooperative members to be the first in

line to take advantage of these savings opportunities. And by savings, we mean savings on the upfront cost of a new appliance and, for the long-term, savings through the appliances' improved energy efficiency.

Here's how the program will work: South Carolinians who want to replace old household appliances with new energy-efficient models could receive discounts of \$50 to \$500 beginning March 31 and continuing until all funds are exhausted.

The rebates for new Energy Star-certified refrigerators, dishwashers, water heaters and other appliances are funded by South Carolina's share of the \$300 million in federal stimulus funds being distributed to each state for appliance rebates. A total of \$3.9 million will be available in South Carolina for rebates.

For appliances bought in a store, the rebate will be applied instantly when the customer goes to the register. Installers of whole-house equipment such as water heaters and HVAC systems will reserve rebates online and then provide customers with mail-in forms. An electronic system will track each rebate issued.

Don't miss out. The Energy Office,

part of the S.C. Budget and Control Board, expects that interest will be high. Funds could be exhausted in a matter of weeks.

Rebate levels were determined based upon the cost difference between a standard and an Energy Star appliance. Energy Star-qualified appliances incorporate advanced technologies that use 10-50 percent less energy and water than standard models.

The rebates will be available only to South Carolina residents making purchases in South Carolina stores and contractors. Customers who purchase a new appliance must turn in the old item. Stores and contractors participating in the rebate program must agree to recycle all old appliances in accordance with standard industry practice. Recycling is required to ensure that inefficient appliances are removed from the power grid.

Retailers and contractors must become approved vendors before they can offer appliance rebates. An approved vendor is a South Carolina based retailer or contractor who has a computer, printer and access to the Internet.

Retailers and contractors should visit www.appliancerebates.sc.gov to sign up. Vendors will find a user guide and video tutorials to help them through the application process.

To learn more about the benefits of upgrading refrigerators, dishwashers and other appliances, access TogetherWeSave.com.

David Altman
President and CEO

Fire extinguishers

A little preparation can go a long way



LEIGH SMITH

Gene Oliver, safety officer, with a fire extinguisher rated for Class A, B, or C fires.

BY GENE OLIVER

HOUSE FIRES CAN HAPPEN IN SECONDS: in one instant, you could go from whipping up dinner to watching flames spring up from the stovetop.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, 410,500 fires — or 78 percent of all reported structure fires — occur in homes. In the right hands, a household fire extinguisher can save lives and protect property should a small fire start.

“Every home should have at least one fire extinguisher, and you need the right type and you must know how and when to use it,” says John Drengenberg, consumer affairs manager at Underwriters Laboratories (UL), the Chicago, Ill.-based not-for-profit firm that tests and sets minimum standards for electricity-consuming items.

Fire extinguishers should be placed in easily accessible areas of the home, close to where they

might be needed (such as in a kitchen, garage, or bedroom). Some basic rules to keep in mind when using household fire extinguishers:

1. If the fire is not spreading and remains confined to a small area, use the appropriate type of extinguisher. Select a multi-purpose extinguisher (rated A, B or C) with the UL mark that can be used on fires of all types such as wood, cloth, paper, flammable liquids (gasoline, oil, grease, oil-based paint), and energized electrical equipment including wiring, fuse boxes, circuit breakers and appliances.

2. Know both your limits and that of the fire extinguisher.

3. Periodically inspect your extinguishers to determine if they need to be recharged or replaced. Extinguishers need to be recharged or replaced after each use — even if you haven’t used the entire extinguishing agent. Check the gauge on the fire extinguisher for this information.

4. When operating a fire extinguisher, stand at least 6 feet away from the fire and keep your back to a door so you can escape easily, if necessary. Remember the word PASS:

- ▶ Pull the pin, hold the extinguisher away from you and release the locking mechanism.
- ▶ Aim low, pointing the

Are you missing a tax break?

Lynches River Electric Cooperative and the Federal Internal Revenue Service (IRS) are collaborating to educate co-op members about the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).

The Earned Income Tax Credit or the EITC is a refundable federal income tax credit for low- to moderate-income working individuals and families. To qualify, taxpayers must meet certain requirements and file a tax return, even if they did not earn enough money to be obligated to file a tax return.

To claim the EITC, taxpayers must meet the following rules:

- ▶ Must have earned income
- ▶ Must have a valid Social Security number
- ▶ Investment income is limited to \$3,100 or less
- ▶ Cannot use “married filing separately” filing status
- ▶ Generally must be a U.S. citizen or resident alien all year
- ▶ Cannot be a qualifying child of another person
- ▶ Cannot file Form 2555 or 2555-EZ (related to foreign earned income)

You need to have worked and have earned income less than:

- ▶ \$13,440 (\$18,440 if married filing jointly) with no qualifying children
- ▶ \$35,463 (\$40,463 if married filing jointly) with one qualifying child
- ▶ \$40,295 (\$45,295 if married filing jointly) with two qualifying children
- ▶ \$43,279 (\$48,279 married filing jointly) with three or more qualifying children

Qualifying child criteria:

- ▶ The child must meet the relationship, age and residency tests.

Not just for families

EITC is not just for families with children. Workers with low income who do not have a child may be able to claim Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). Childless workers with low-income are believed to be the largest group of taxpayers who do not claim the credit.

For more information on the Earned Income Tax Credit and electronic filing, visit www.irs.gov/eitc or call 1-800-TAX-1040.

extinguisher at the base of the fire.

- ▶ Squeeze the lever slowly and evenly.
- ▶ Sweep the nozzle from side to side.

“Fire extinguishers for home use are not designed to fight large or spreading fires,” stresses Drengenberg. “Rather than fighting the fire, your

number one priority should be getting out safely.”

GENE OLIVER is Lynches River Electric Cooperative’s safety officer. He is available to present electric safety demonstrations to school, civic or community groups. Contact Gene Oliver or Leigh Smith at Lynches River, 1-800-922-3486, to schedule a presentation.