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**SANTEE ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE NEWS**

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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Fun and cold, two parts of winter



The fun part

THE BEGINNING OF winter is pretty exciting! We technically mark the first day of winter as December 21, but, to me, it's all about when the cold arrives. So many wonderful things come with the beginning of winter. I particularly think that first frost

after autumn is great. There's nothing quite like a crisp, bright, cold morning with the sun reflecting off every blade of grass and every leaf.

I also love the beginning of winter because of the holidays, and I particularly love Christmas lights. Whether you have a single strand along your roof or an entire house and yard blazing like Clark Griswold on Christmas Vacation, I love the spirit it shows. Some folks like to do a small amount of elegant white lights, and some like every color of the rainbow and a yard full of inflatables. I love them all. When we were kids, my sister and I loved to have a competition when taking a trip at night during the Christmas season to see how many houses with Christmas lights we could count on our side of the road. I passed that along to my kids—with me helping my son count along the driver's side and my wife helping my daughter count the passenger's side.

After Christmas, of course, we have New Year's parties and resolutions. We have bowl games, a chance to prove which conference is the best, and a new National Champion. The part I don't like comes next.

The cold part

The fun ends, and you realize it's just cold. They call it the "dead of winter" for a reason. Everything is brown, the holidays are over, your hands are chapped, and you cannot stand to go outside. Days are short, darkness is long, and power bills are getting too high.

Nothing adds insult to injury like piling a too-high power bill on top of all that cold and darkness. Here's how you can help. First, you can make sure your thermostat is set no higher than 72 degrees in the winter (even lower is better). Second, you need to make sure every gap, crack, and opening in your home is sealed tightly; otherwise, you are throwing money out the window! Third, you can help us keep your rates as low as possible by participating in our Beat the Peak program. It's an effort to help control energy costs for all co-op members. I'm asking you to visit EnergySmartSC.org and sign up for alerts. You can get an email, a text message or a phone call that tells you when the peak will be. Postponing the use of major appliances during that time will help tremendously.

Thanks for doing all you can. Hang in there, and help me wish for an early spring!

ROBERT G. ARDIS III

President and Chief Executive Officer