



BEMC powers environmental village

Brunswick Electric continues to earn its reputation as your resource for energy efficiency information, excellent member service, and reliable electricity. We're local, and we were built by the community to serve the community. One of the ways we serve our members' needs is by looking ahead to new technologies and practices that will keep BEMC ahead of the industry curve.

One such unique opportunity is the Heron's Nest, an environmental village located in Shallotte near Village Point. Thirty-three home sites are positioned among the live oaks where about half a dozen cottages have sprung up. The Adams Group, the developer of the Heron's Nest community, says its goal is to build an environment-friendly neighborhood that has the feeling of an historic cottage village. Setting it apart are the renewables built into the floorplans, including programmable water heaters and thermostats, rooftop solar panels and on-site battery storage, all designed to lessen the carbon footprint and promote sustainable living.

BEMC worked with the Adams Group to develop a pilot program assessing the value of a new hot water heater demand control program. This involved partnering with Vaughn

hot water heaters for units that are equipped with Carina Technologies controls, which regulates the functionality of the water heater and has an LED display box.

If viable, the cooperative plans to take what we learn and expand it into a wide-reaching program benefitting members who choose to participate, and the cooperative as a whole. This is a good example of using new technology to find innovative ways to better control cooperative costs. Here's why. Just like roads at rush hour, the electric grid experiences periods of high traffic, or demand. The cooperative's cost for wholesale electricity is most expensive when demand for it is greatest. Everyone

benefits when we work together to reduce or shift electricity use during these high traffic times, because we pay a lower wholesale rate for electricity when there is less demand. Those savings are what we can pass on to our members to help keep rates as low as possible.

Neighborhood-wide applications like this hot water heater program at Heron's Nest, BEMC's solar options, and our electric vehicle charging stations are just a few visible indicators of our efforts to stay on top of industry trends.

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