



PSA VIDEO CASE STUDY

Beating Peak Electric Demand, and Severe Weather with Apogee Interactive Videos

The electric cooperatives sending these videos to their members report they have been well received and effective.

“The information these videos contain could save members’ dollars as well as lives,” commented Andrew Packett, a public relations specialist for Northern Neck Electric Cooperative, one of several Old Dominion Electric Cooperative (ODEC) electric cooperatives using one or both of the Apogee Interactive videos.

“Safety and savings are two hot-button topics for our members.”

“People don’t want to take the time to read,” said Erin Puryear, manager of member services and energy innovations planning at ODEC, a large generation and transmission (G&T) electric cooperative located in Glen Allen, Virginia. *“For a quick informational hit, nothing beats videos. The videos are another vehicle for our cooperatives to communicate with their members.”*

Beat the Peak Video:

ODEC and its 11 member cooperatives operate in Virginia, Delaware and Maryland. This places all of them in the PJM Interconnection, the regional transmission organization through which all electricity in the region is bought and sold.

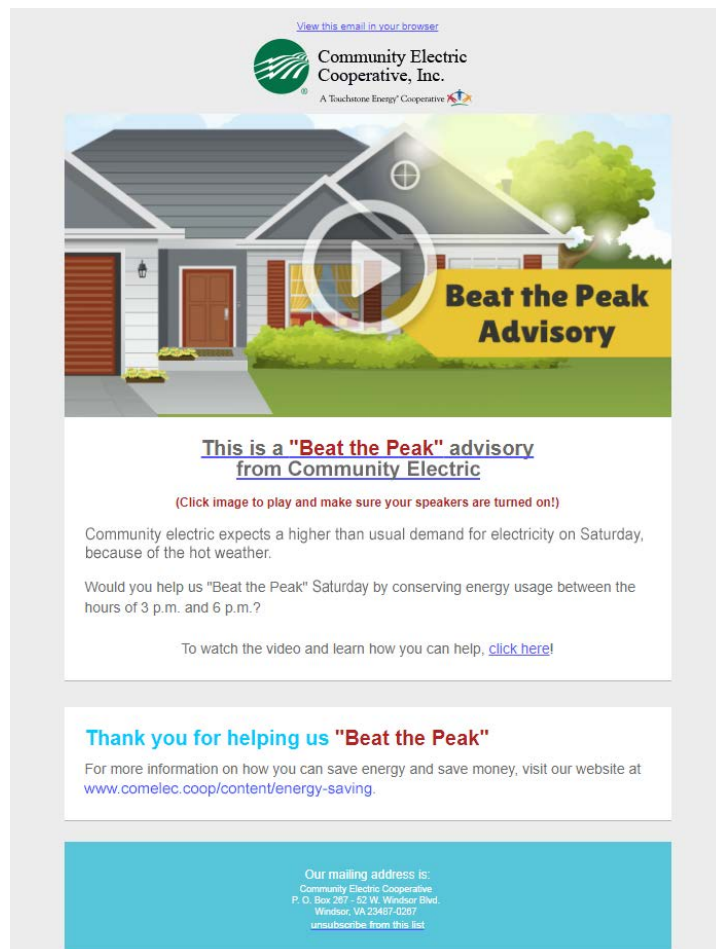
The region’s extreme weather, coupled with customer growth in some areas and the retirement of coal-fired power plants, have led to increased electric price volatility in recent years. Wholesale electric prices typically average about \$35 per megawatt-hour, but on rare occasions have risen to as much as \$550 per megawatt-hour, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.



Price spikes like that can devastate the wallets of co-ops and their members. Community Electric Cooperative, one of the ODEC cooperatives using Apogee's Beat the Peak video, got a 3.4% peak load reduction — about 1.8 megawatts on a peak load of about 53 megawatts — when it sent its members that video.

"Lowering our peak demand is the gift that keeps on giving," said Community's Chief Financial Officer Greg Cook, because ODEC uses summer peak demand to set demand charges for the ensuing 12 months.

Beat the Peak video got a 3.4% peak load reduction.



Only about 16% of Community's members opened a recent "Beat the Peak" email sent without a video link. But when the co-op sent an email with a link to the video, the open rate soared to 40.9%. Greg said, adding rhetorically, "Quite a difference, right?"

Other ODEC co-ops achieved open rates of between 9.45% and 40% with emails that included a Beat the Peak video link; and member comments have been overwhelmingly positive. Several co-ops said they had very few members opt out of the email + video service, another sign of the video's value and effectiveness.

Severe Storm Videos

The area served by ODEC's cooperatives is in an odd place weather-wise. Nestled between the Appalachian Mountains and the Atlantic Ocean, the area is prone to extreme weather, including hurricanes, sweltering heat and humidity, powerful thunderstorms, ice storms and the occasional blizzard.

OPEC's cooperatives began using Apogee's extreme weather videos in 2015 and 2016.



"Severe weather really scares people. And around here people went over the top around Labor Day 2016, when Hurricane Hermine was barreling up the Atlantic coast," said Beth Gertsch, a communications specialist with Choptank Electric Cooperative. "People ran in droves to the store to stock up on bread and milk when they heard we were in the path of a hurricane."

Hermine didn't hit the ODEC cooperatives, it veered out to sea and weakened to a tropical storm before it reached the Mid-Atlantic region. However, Beth was glad she had a severe storm video at her disposal that provided members with tips on how to prepare for a hurricane.

The Apogee video complemented Choptank's in-house videos and its website power outage map. Those in-house videos, called "We're Ready," tended to focus on the co-op's preparations to restore power during and after severe storms. *"The Apogee video went hand in glove with our 'We're Ready' videos and our outage-restoration map," she said.*

"These videos are a great value for us because they promote safety and storm preparedness for our members,"

Beth continued. *"They help keep members informed and calm, and show members we're looking out for them."*

Lynn Thornton, customer communications coordinator for Prince George Electric Cooperative added, *"These videos are like Smartphones — we didn't know we needed them until we had them! Most members don't really want to read a page of FEMA severe weather warnings and tips. It's so much easier and more effective to send them a video."*

...we didn't know we needed them until we had them!

To schedule a demonstration of our Beat the Peak or Severe Weather videos, or any other personalized video messaging service,

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