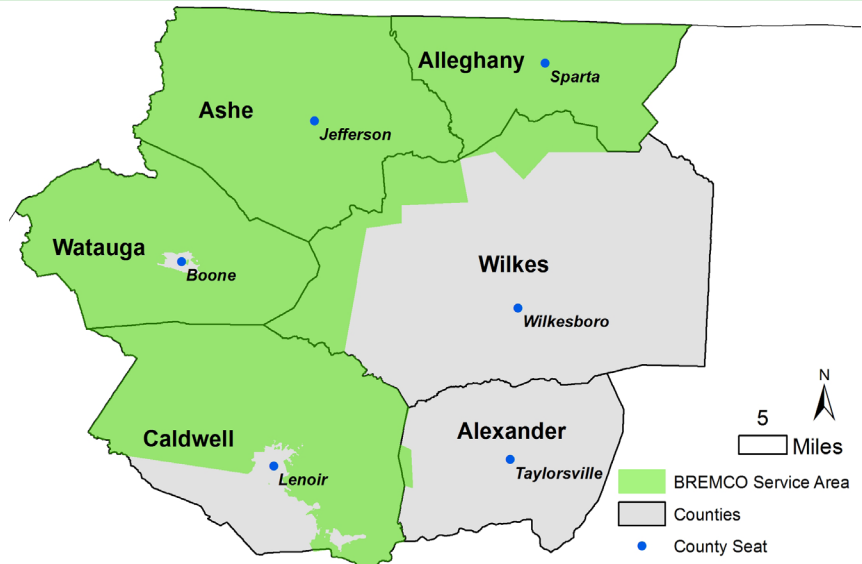


# High Country Home Energy Makeover Contest



## Key facts about Blue Ridge Electric Membership Corporation

- The Blue Ridge Electric Membership Corporation is one of 26 electric membership co-ops in North Carolina.
- Blue Ridge Electric serves approximately 62,340 residential customers in Caldwell, Watauga, Ashe, and Alleghany counties and parts of Wilkes, Alexander and Avery counties.
- The average annual electric bill for Blue Ridge Electric households in 2012 was \$1,381.
- Blue Ridge Electric serves an area with an average poverty rate of 23%.
- The burden of electricity cost -- the portion of household income spent on electricity -- among Blue Ridge Electric members is higher than the national average; roughly 3.9% of median household income, compared with 2.7% nationally.
- Blue Ridge Electric generates the 5th highest revenue and has the 6th highest sales among all N.C. electric cooperatives.
- While other N.C. cooperatives offer low-cost loans to their members to pay for home energy-efficiency improvements, Blue Ridge Electric does not. (Co-ops that offer comprehensive low-cost loans include Brunswick, Central, Cape Hatteras, Halifax, Lumbee River, and Roanoke Electric. French Broad Electric offers on-bill financing for energy efficient heating systems.)



If Blue Ridge Electric offered such loans, repayable through members' monthly bills (called "on-bill financing"), and if just 1% of its residential customers took a \$7,500 loan\*:

- \$4.7 million could be spent on energy efficiency projects in a 5-year period
- 70 total jobs could be created from that investment
- \$900 a year could be the amount the average household saves
- Another 80 jobs could be created from the re-investment of this saved money in local goods and services

*\*The job estimates were calculated using state and region-wide values reported from a [2013 Southeast Energy Efficiency Alliance report](#). Loan investment and average annual household savings were calculated by Appalachian Voices.*

Visit [appvoices.org/energycontest](http://appvoices.org/energycontest) for more info  
Contact: Rory McIlmoil, Energy Policy Director  
(828) 262-1500 or [Rory@appvoices.org](mailto:Rory@appvoices.org)



**AppalachianVoices**  
Protecting the Central and Southern Appalachian Mountain Region