

January 2012

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Carolina Mountains
Credit Union

A division of Self-Help Credit Union

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With e-Services, we can **grow green together!**

When you see efforts to encourage "green" living, do you think about your world or your wallet? Well, we want you to think about both! You can have a positive impact on the environment AND reduce expenses for yourself and the Credit Union by using the electronic services that we offer. Think of them as "Green Services!" Check out these simple ways that we can together make a big difference:

- Switching to e-Statements and Bill Pay Service could save the average household 6.6 pounds of paper, 63 gallons of water, 4.5 gallons of fuel and 171 pounds of greenhouse gases per year.
- Save \$20 a year for each energy efficient light bulb.
- 85% of identity theft is caused by lost checkbooks, stolen bills and check payments – not online transactions.
- Recycling supported 14,000 North Carolina jobs last year.
- Self-Help investments in energy efficiency will save \$87,000 in North Carolina facilities next year.

Save Energy and Money This Winter

A home equity loan or consumer loan from Carolina Mountains Credit Union can help you invest in energy efficiency and greater comfort for your home. Come talk to a loan officer today.

Carolina Mountains Credit Union is managing utility costs and protecting the environment. Here's some tips you can use at home:

- Every compact fluorescent light bulb can save \$20 per year. Find the bulb for your fixture at: <http://bit.ly/1K6fHg>.
- Turn down your thermostat by 2 degrees when you sleep or when you go out.
- Save \$66/year when you turn off your computer and monitor daily.
- Save \$75 dollars/year when you wash clothes in cold water.
- Set your water heater temperature to 120 degrees.

Which of these tips can you adopt? Tell us by email at green@self-help.org and we'll enter you in a gift card drawing!



Click on the Green Services icon on your Carolina Mountains Credit Union's homepage to learn more about your credit union's green services. Read more about Self-Help Credit Union's Environmental Investing and Success Stories at self-help.org/green. Calculate your green footprint at payitgreen.org.

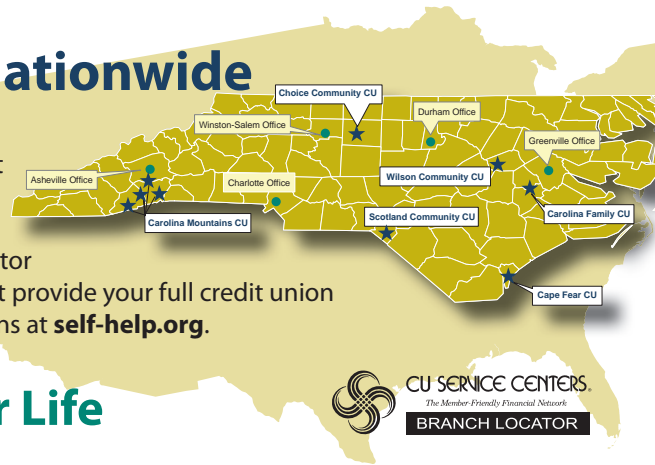
In the Asheville area, CMCU has partnered with the "Neighbor Saves" program of the Western North Carolina Green Building Council to Save Energy, Save Money, Improve Comfort and Build Community. Participants work in teams to complete work on each other's houses. They are trained by an experienced energy pro who also supervises the work. Participants are eligible for loans from CMCU to purchase the supplies they need for the project.

To save big on energy bills, it's time to call in a home energy professional. The website Energy Circle will help you find an auditor and learn what to expect from an energy audit: <http://bit.ly/855Sc10>. Low income homeowners may be eligible for free energy efficiency services through community action agencies: <http://bit.ly/pqEZfs>.

Learn more about how the Self-Help family of Credit Unions is going green: www.self-help.org/green.

Access Your Account Statewide or Nationwide

As a division of Self Help, your credit union has branches across the state, from the mountains to the coast. As a member, you also have access to your account at more than 4,000 nationwide locations of CU Service Centers. The Service Center charges a \$2 fee for withdrawals, but all other services are free. Find any shared branch location by calling **toll-free 800-919-2872** or using the locator website address. Say that you are a member of Self-Help Credit Union. You must provide your full credit union member account number. Learn more about the Self-Help family of credit unions at self-help.org.



F.U.N. Club Donates \$528 to Friends For Life



On October 15th, 2011, the CMCU F.U.N. Club Members and others enjoyed a Fall Fun Day at the Penrose branch complete with hay rides, pony rides, bounce house, games, and refreshments. The highlight of the day was the F.U.N. Club's Contribution to Friends for Life, a sanctuary for senior and special needs dogs and cats, located between Cashiers and Brevard. F.U.N. stands for Financial Understanding

Now. Its purpose is to teach youth to save in a FUN Way! If you are interested in more information on the F.U.N. Club, please let us know.

Credit Card Tips for the New Year



Since the average consumer carries 3.7 credit cards, we know you could have credit cards in addition to the one issued by your credit union. New rules make credit card pricing clearer by eliminat-

ing many unfair fees and rate hikes. Here are a few things to keep in mind (Visit responsiblelending.org for more information.)

- Under new law effective February 2010, issuers can't increase interest rates on existing balances unless you pay late by 60 days or more or have a variable rate. If your rate jumps because you've been late, the issuer must automatically reduce it if you then pay on time for six consecutive months. Variable rate changes must be pegged to a specified index, and if the index falls, your rate must, too.
- Paying more than a monthly minimum always helps consumers save on interest charges, but the 2010 law makes the savings greater: issuers must now apply anything above the minimum to the balance carrying the highest interest rate. They also can't charge over-limit fees unless you explicitly say you want to be allowed to exceed your limit and understand you'll incur a fee for doing so.
- Credit card issuers can still employ bait-and-switch tactics by offering rewards that can be cut or yanked for any reason. And they can raise interest rates without limit and for any reason on new balances.
- The law doesn't apply to business credit cards, so bad practices, including arbitrary interest rate hikes on existing balances, persist.

Finally, it's important to shop around for a credit card since many credit unions and small banks offer credit cards without the gotcha features listed above. As always, beware not to overspend and avoid carrying a balance as credit cards typically carry high interest rates.



Teller Tips

* Now is the perfect time to save for the Holidays. Open a Holiday Club Account today!

Carolina Mountains Credit Union

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Office Locations and Phone Numbers

5716 Old Hendersonville Highway
Pisgah Forest NC 28768
828 884 8835
Toll free 800 223 6730
Fax 828 884 2286
Office Hours: M-F 9:00 to 5:00,
Extended drive-thru hours Friday 8:30 to 6:00

855 Spartanburg Highway
Hendersonville NC 28792
828 233 1140
Toll free 866 206 7299
Fax 828 233 1147
Office Hours: M-F 9:00 to 5:00,
Extended drive-thru hours Friday 8:30 to 6:00

59 Chestnut Street West, Suite 1
Rosman, NC 28772
828 877 2153
Fax 828 877 2155
Office Hours: M-F 9:00 to 5:00, closed 1-2pm

1911 Hendersonville Road
Asheville, NC 28803
828 687 1066
Fax 828 676 2254
Office Hours: M-F 9:00 to 5:00

Web site: www.carolinamountainscu.org
www.self-help.org



For current rates, please contact a branch location.