

## CO-OPS AND COMMUNITY JOBS



## Four County EMC helps Pender EMS & Fire expand its regional services

Over the last two years, Four County EMC based in Burgaw has helped Pender EMS and Fire Inc. acquire ambulances, first responder 911 vehicles and the associated equipment to enhance vehicles used to provide emergency medical services. Pender EMS and Fire serves the citizens of Pender County, including the municipalities of Surf City, Hampstead and Burgaw, as well as more than 30,000 tourists who visit the area each year.

The electric co-op procured a combined \$600,000 in two USDA Rural Economic Development loan and grants (REDLG) and issued interest-free loans to Pender EMS and Fire.

Pender EMS and Fire covers 900 square miles and 20 miles of coastal barrier islands. As a N.C. Teaching Institution, it offers a variety of services to the county, such as non-emergency transport services, ocean rescue, wilderness search and rescue, state medical assistance teams, high-level rescue, industrial rescue and swift water rescue. The service also offers the county's AED program along with CPR classes for local health providers, child providers and

the public. The loans will help Pender EMS expand and enhance its services in this underserved county.

Four County EMC provided a \$300,000 zero-interest loan with its first USDA award in 2013. Pender EMS and Fire also provided \$70,000 to supplement the co-op funding. The \$370,000 purchased an ambulance and three emergency response vehicles, along with associated equipment needed to outfit the vehicles, such as AEDs, MobiData computer systems and other life-saving equipment. With the funding, four full-time positions will eventually be created.

In 2014, Four County EMC procured another \$300,000 zero-interest REDLG loan, and Pender EMS provided an additional \$60,000. The \$360,000 purchased three remounted ambulances, plus the associated equipment to outfit the vehicles.

Four County EMC board secretary-treasurer Gene Jordan said, "Four County EMC is proud to partner with Pender EMS & Fire, Inc. to bring state-of-the-art emergency medical equipment to the citizens of Pender County."