

# POWERLINES

A Publication by APCO Employees Credit Union | Powering financial lives. | October 2021 | Issue 175



**Now is the Best Time  
to Buy a New Car or Truck**  
**Home Equity Line of Credit**  
**Cybersecurity Tips**

# Now is the Best Time to Buy a New Car or Truck

Shopping for your new set of wheels can be overwhelming and maybe even intimidating. That's understandable. But, with the right tools, preparation, and sharp negotiating skills you can place yourself in the right position to get a bargain. Here are some tips that may help you get a better deal:

**Statistics show that fall and winter are the best seasons for auto shopping.** This is when next year's models are about to go on sale. You can often buy the current model year at a discounted price.

**Don't let your purchase be an impulse or emotional one.** You can find a lot of information online, but the key is to find what will really help you. Pricing, safety, and cost of ownership are a few things that can help you make your final decision.

**Shop at the end of the month or quarter.** Dealerships and salespeople are judged on their sales performance. They have quotas to meet. At the end of the month or quarter, they are eager to make a sale and a deal.

**Shop early in the week.** Weekends are standard busy days for dealerships. Shopping on a Monday or Tuesday can get you more personal attention.

**Know how much the dealer paid for the vehicle.** Be a savvy negotiator. Know the invoice price on a new vehicle or wholesale and retail on a used vehicle,



plus any charges for clean up and delivery. It will help in negotiation.

**Whenever you decide to buy, shop prepared.** Whether you buy a new car or one that's new to you, put yourself in the best negotiating position by getting pre-approved for the loan. Your Credit Union offers fast, friendly service and our rates are competitive. You should request that any factory incentives be applied to the purchase price. Once you have your "bottom line" price, let us pre-approve you for a vehicle loan so we can help you shop for your next vehicle from a position of authority.

**To begin the process of applying for an auto loan, or for more information about auto loans, you may visit us online at <https://www.apcocu.org/auto-loans-and-rates/>. Better yet, we'd love to see you! Stop by or give your local branch a call for personalized service. One of our loan officers is ready to meet your lending needs and get you behind the wheel today!**

\*A lower credit score may cause a higher loan rate.

## A Home Equity Line of Credit from your Credit Union Makes Borrowing Simple!



A home equity line of credit (HELOC) is a great way to leverage the value of your home and ensure you have funds available for whatever you want, such as home improvements and additions, debt consolidation, education, family vacations, and more!

If you have a home and have been making payments on your mortgage for years, then you may have built up a significant amount of equity. Similar to a credit card, a home equity line

of credit allows you to borrow what you need, as you need it, up until you reach your credit limit.

### The Details\*:

- **Borrow up to 85% of the equity of your home**
- **Quick approval process**
- **Closing costs are waived with an initial draw of \$10,000 for new HELOC borrowers, otherwise closing costs are estimated between \$150 to \$1,000.**
- **10-year draw period**
- **No annual fee**
- **Competitive rates**

An APCO Employees Credit Union HELOC gives you the buying power you need to maximize life or simply provide a line of credit that's ready in case an unexpected expense comes your way. Visit us online at [apcocu.org](http://apcocu.org) to apply today!

\* See lender for further information concerning fees, rates, and terms.

# 1.75% Rewards When You Choose Your Credit Union Visa



**Visa is the most accepted credit card worldwide, and your Credit Union offers credit card options to meet your needs. That means you can use it with confidence anywhere you shop, dine or travel.**

Membership in uChoose Rewards® is free as part of your APCO Employees Credit Union credit card plan. uChoose Rewards allows you to redeem points on your credit card purchases to use for cash back, shopping, travel, event tickets, gift cards and more.

After you register your card, you will start earning points the first time you make a transaction with your new credit card. You'll earn 1.75% on every \$1.00 you spend. You can earn additional points by shopping in-store or online with participating retailers.

eCS offers real-time credit card information, including transactions, pending activity, payment information and custom email alerts. Cardholder Service can help you 24/7 with lost or stolen cards, balance inquires, payment information, transaction history, charge disputes, or statement requests. Plus, you can sign up for electronic statements when you log into your account through your Credit Union's online banking at [apcocu.org](http://apcocu.org).

## Find Surcharge Free ATMs Near Your Travel Destination

As a Credit Union member, you're provided access to your accounts through the CO-OP Shared Network. That means you have access to more than 30,000 surcharge free ATMs and 5,600 shared branches throughout the country. To find the nearest ATM or Shared Branch:

- Visit your Credit Union's website at [apcocu.org](http://apcocu.org) and select CU Service Centers under the Locations tab.
- Text\* a zip code to 91989 to find nearby ATM locations
- Download the CO-OP ATM App to your iPhone or Android phone



## Help Alabamians with Relief on Energy Bills this Winter

For some, weather extremes are simply an inconvenience, but for the disabled or elderly who struggle to pay their energy bills weather extremes can lead to unsafe living conditions.



The Salvation Army offers support for these struggling Alabamians through Project Share - a program that helps pay energy bills through Alabama Power and rural electric cooperatives.

With winter around the corner, Project Share has an urgent need. APCO Employees Credit Union is proud to help bring awareness to its members about this program. Here's how you can give to Project Share: Prior to mailing or submitting your power bill payment online, select the donate box of your choice for Project Share. You can donate any whole dollar amount.

All donations are tax deductible.

For more information about Project Share, visit <https://salvationarmyalm.org/birmingham/project-share/>



## Welcome to the Family!

APCO Employees Credit Union is proud to partner with 150+ business partners and organizations to provide credit union services and membership to their employees and their families.

We would like to welcome the following Select Employee Groups to our Credit Union family:

**Heiche Manufacturing**  
**University FanCards**  
**City of Saraland**  
**HGH Hardware Supply**  
**Selective Inc.**  
**City of Jasper**

If you're interested in how your business can add Credit Union membership to its employee benefits package, give us a call at 205-226-6800.

## LOCATIONS

Check [apcocu.org/locations](http://apcocu.org/locations) to verify branches are open.

### MAIN OFFICE

750 17th Street North  
Birmingham, AL 35203  
(205) 226-6800  
1-800-249-APCO (2726)

### Anniston

925 Quintard Avenue  
(205) 813-7500

### Chelsea

370 Chelsea Crossroads  
(205) 678-8406

### Clanton

1872 7th Street South  
(205) 280-0366

### Corporate Headquarters

600 North 18th Street  
Birmingham, AL 35203  
(205) 257-1592

### Dothan

2220 Montgomery Highway  
(334) 793-7226

### Energy Center

(Colonnade - Hoover)  
3535 Colonnade Parkway  
(205) 992-5030

### Gardendale

949 Main Street  
(205) 598-8300

### Hoover

4725 Chace Circle  
(205) 823-7403

### Hueytown

2901 Allison-Bonnell Drive  
(205) 257-3905

### Jasper

706 20th Avenue East  
(205) 221-4238

### Jasper West

2501 Highway 78 W  
(205) 878-4600

### Mobile

150 St. Joseph Street  
(251) 694-2383

### Montgomery

244 Dexter Avenue  
(334) 832-3822

### Pelham

101 Huntley Parkway  
(205) 664-7421

### Tattersall

6400 Tattersall Park Drive  
Hoover, AL 35242  
(205) 547-9400

### Trussville

151 Main Street  
(205) 661-2715

### Tuscaloosa

630 15th Street  
(205) 345-6550

### Tuscaloosa Queen City

915 Queen City Ave  
(205) 722-7300

### West Mobile

6396 Airport Blvd  
(251) 434-5634



## Stay Alert and Stay Safe Online

**APCO Employees Credit Union is committed to the safety and confidentiality of your records, but others online may not be. Identity theft is one of the most vicious crimes out there. Here are some tips to help you protect yourself:**

### Learn to Spot Scams

Be cautious of anyone asking you to deposit an item into your account and immediately wire or send a portion of the funds elsewhere. The scammer usually requests you to send those funds via money gram, Western Union or prepaid Visa gift cards, and deposit them into an account at another financial institution.

*Bonus Tip: Always tell a Credit Union employee if you are concerned or unsure of a check that is being deposited into your account.*

### Examine Your Financial Statements

Review your financial statements monthly and check carefully for fraudulent activity. Report any suspicious charges immediately.

*Bonus Tip: Sign up for alerts and limit your credit card activity to a specific geographical area. Shred all aged documents that contain sensitive information.*

### FINANCIAL REPORT

	06/30/2021	06/30/2020
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Assets	\$ 3,578,568,621	\$ 3,215,266,264
Savings	\$ 3,165,585,510	\$ 2,801,843,165
Loans	\$ 769,047,981	\$ 830,416,404
Members	71,986	71,692

### Choose Strong Passwords

Use different, strong passwords for each of your accounts and devices.

*Bonus Tip: Stay away from numbers that mean something to you (birthdays, phone numbers, social security numbers, special dates, street addresses, etc.).*

### Protect Your Computer

Invest in a strong anti-spyware program to protect your hardware from hackers.

*Bonus Tip: Encrypt your hard drive for an extra level of protection.*

### Be Wary of Suspicious Emails and Websites

Don't open suspicious-looking emails or click on links for unfamiliar sites. Only do business online with places you know.

*Bonus Tip: If your inbox is flooded with promotional emails, unsubscribe from some of them. This will help you spot the truly bad apples.*

### Use Two-Factor Identification

The extra log-in step will help ward off scammers and add another layer of security to your accounts.

*Bonus Tip: Never elect to have a device "remember your password" for a site that involves payments of any kind.*

### Avoid Public Wi-Fi

Public Wi-Fi is a great hunting ground for thieves; steer clear if you can. At the very least, avoid all online banking or password logins while using public Wi-Fi.

*Bonus Tip: Secure your own home Wi-Fi with a strong password.*

## Stay connected with your Credit Union!

Follow us on  
**Facebook (APCOCreditUnion),**  
**Twitter (@apcocu) and**  
**Instagram (@apcocu).**

Visit us online at [www.apcocu.org](http://www.apcocu.org).

### Board of Directors

Mark Wilkinson – Chairman  
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Billy Gober – Director  
Melinda Lopez – Director  
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Carlton Stephens – Director

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Constantine Sfakianos – Member

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William M. Bass

### Supervisory Committee

Greg Bass – Chairperson  
Allison Boone – Member  
Ann Wilkinson – Member

### President / CEO

Derrick E. Ragland, Jr.

### HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

Veterans Day, Thursday, November 11, 2021

Thanksgiving, November 25–26, 2021

Christmas, December 23–24, 2021

New Years Eve, December 31, 2021



Federally Insured by NCUA  
Equal Housing Opportunity Lender

**APCO EMPLOYEES  
CREDIT UNION**

[www.apcocu.org](http://www.apcocu.org)

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