

Bright Ideas Program Wins National Award

North Carolina's electric cooperatives' Bright Ideas program has gained national recognition by recently being named as a National Community Service Award recipient.

In 2009, the Bright Ideas Grant program passed the \$7 million mark. The program, which began in 1994, awards grants to teachers for innovative, classroom-based projects that otherwise would not have been funded. South River EMC alone has funded \$531,000 for worthy programs and projects in local schools.

This award is offered by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), and has three categories: youth programs, energy efficiency and community investment.

Bright Ideas was entered into the youth program category where the award honors significant contributions of electric cooperatives to local, state, and national youth programs. Programs in this category should help youth understand the cooperative

business model, or the importance of civic responsibility and political or community involvement.

Approximately 50 applications were submitted in this category.

As a recipient of the award, a video was produced highlighting the Bright Ideas Grant program. Two teachers who have received Bright Ideas funding from South River EMC are featured in the film.

The film will be shown at the NRECA annual meeting in February.



Harnett County teachers received 16 grants in 2009.

Cooperative Announces Change Of Rates

South River EMC's base rates will change with bills issued after March 1. There have been several significant changes. Each of the changes is listed below for you to review.

Why South River EMC is changing its rates:

From January 2006 until October 2009, the Consumer Price Index increased 17.81 percent. The economic downturn has caused a myriad of issues from unemployment to increases in the cost of products and services. The Cooperative has not been immune to these forces. For the past year, we have been using a wholesale power cost adjustment, or WPCA, of \$0.0088 per kilowatt hour, or kwh, on bills to offset cost increases.

Recently, South River EMC commissioned a cost of service study to determine whether our current rates are adequate to cover our expenses. The study revealed that the existing rates are not sufficient to meet the increases

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Bazaar Booths Available

South River EMC will once again have the South River EMC bazaar at the 2010 Annual Meeting of Members.

The 2010 annual meeting will be held on Thursday, April 15. Vendor spaces are *free of charge* and are available on a first-come, first-served basis. All vendors must be reputable, legitimate businesses that offer a valuable service to our members.

Bazaar booths offer an opportunity for your business to make contact with nearly 2,000 people in a relaxed, informal setting.

Our past vendors have varied in available services but include heating and air conditioning, pest control, insurance, health care, catering, etc.

If you have a business and are interested in having a booth at the South River EMC bazaar, please call Julie Wahl at 910-892-8071, ext. 2151 or e-mail jwahl@sremc.com to discuss options.

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in the cost of conducting business and the continuing needs of the Cooperative.

Schedule R

We now have one rate exclusively for homes. Schedule R has an energy charge of 9.31¢ per kwh (November through April) and 10.31¢ per kwh (May through October). The facilities charge will move from \$12.75 to \$20 for single-phase service and \$38.25 to \$40 for three-phase service. Because we have been using the WPCA for over a year, the transition should be virtually unnoticed. The average household uses about 1,320 kwh a month and the WPCA for the average household bill equals \$11.62 monthly.

Bill comparison:

A home that uses 1,320 kwh can expect the following bill (including taxes and facilities charges):

old rate: winter - \$152.69 (with WPCA)
new rate: winter - \$147.18

old rate: summer - \$159.10 (with WPCA)
new rate: summer - \$160.77

Students Make the Grade

Do you have a student that has received at least one A on his or her most recent report card?

South River EMC's program, "Give Us An A," is a way of recognizing students for their hard work and rewarding them for their efforts.

A drawings will be held February 2 for students who have achieved at least one A on their report card. We draw 11 names and each of the students receives a \$50 US Savings Bond.

The program is open to students who are members or children of members of South River EMC. So make a copy of the most recent report card with at least one A and send it to the Cooperative.

Please include:

- The member's name
- Their South River EMC account number
- The student's social security number
- A daytime phone number

Report cards should be sent to:

South River EMC
"Give Us An A"
PO Box 931
Dunn, NC 28335

Small General Service (SGS)

Any other metered service that is not a home and does not have a commercial rate, will be placed on the SGS rate. The SGS rate is new and allows us to differentiate between homes and other non-residential services. This rate class will include barns, water pumps, small commercial accounts, electric fences and many other non-residential services that require less than 50 kilowatts, or kw, of electricity monthly.

Facilities charges:

single-phase: \$22 monthly
three-phase: \$44 monthly

Energy charges:

The first 750 kwh: 10.82¢ per kwh
The next 1,250 kwh: 9.52¢ per kwh
The next 2,000 kwh: 9.04¢ per kwh
All kwh above 4,000: 8.59¢ per kwh

Because of changes in our industry, housing code improvements and the need to ensure all rate classes are self-supporting, South River EMC will be eliminating some existing rates.

Rate 25 (5 percent discount)

South River EMC is eliminating the current energy-efficient home 5 percent discount (rate 25). Because of ever changing building codes and efficiency improvements, the majority of these homes are no longer exceeding state and federal energy-efficiency standards.

Rate 90 (Interruptible Service)

We are eliminating the interruptible rate (IS 90) program. In the past, wholesale power contracts were purchased at a specific price with an additional charge for the highest demand each month (generally about \$18 per kw). This pricing structure made it important for utilities to implement programs that helped reduce the monthly peak. In recent years, North Carolina's electric cooperatives have been able to secure purchased power contracts that are no longer tied to costly peak demand charges. All blocks of power are now more uniformly priced, which removes the emphasis from shifting load off peak.

As a result, we can no longer offer Rate 90 without operating at a loss.

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*South River EMC Celebrates 70 Years,
Bridging the Gap From Darkness to Light.*

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Final Notices

In the second quarter of 2010, South River EMC will reduce the amount of time allowed before delinquent accounts are eligible for disconnection. Members with overdue accounts must pay close attention to their electric bills because the disconnection dates will be clearly noted and final notices will no longer be sent. Also, late fees will increase from \$7.50 to \$10.



What is a facilities charge?

The facilities charge partially represents the expense of delivering electricity to you. However, a facilities charge is not truly representative of all expenses associated with the generation, transmission and distribution of electricity. Therefore, the remainder of those expenses is rolled into the energy charge. In the best-case scenario, all costs associated with the delivery of electricity to your home or business should be recovered through the facilities charge and the energy fees would be only for energy expenses. The change in the facilities charge is movement toward this goal.



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COOPERATIVE FCU?
WHY NOW?**

BECAUSE NOW IS A BETTER TIME
THAN EVER TO JOIN YOUR
ELECTEL COOPERATIVE
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

- Have your banking fees increased?
- Have your lending rates increased?
- Do you pay an ATM fee?
- Has your credit card interest rate increased?
- Have your loan limits decreased?
- Are you having difficulty obtaining a loan?
- Have your lending policies changed?
- Do you have high cost, low quality service?

If you answered "yes" to these
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Are You A High School Junior? You Could See Washington, D.C.!

Each year South River EMC sends three rising seniors, as ambassadors of the Cooperative, on the trip of a lifetime.

The Rural Electric Youth Tour has sent high school students to Washington, D.C., every June since the late 1950s. Students compete for slots for this unique opportunity and are selected by their local electric cooperative.

As participants in the Rural Electric Youth Tour, students will experience Washington, D.C., from June 12-18.

Interested students are asked to complete an application and to visit the Cooperative for an informal interview. The decision is always a tough one because of the outstanding credentials of the students interested in this program.

As a participant in the Youth Tour, students walk away from the week a better leader and with a sense that they can make a difference. It shows our future leaders how important it is to learn about

the political process and to interact with their government.

Featured speakers during National Youth Day provide insight to the importance of electric cooperatives in their community. Students gain a personal understanding of American history and their role as a citizen by meeting their congressional delegates and exploring the sights around the nation's capital. Past participants have gone on to design airplanes, work as congressional aides on Capitol Hill, and serve in some of the highest positions in our government such as lieutenant governor and in the U.S. Senate.

If you are interested, please visit www.sremc.com for an application, e-mail sremc@sremc.com or call Julie Wahl at (910) 892-8071, ext. 2151. The deadline for all applications is February 27.



Hey Middle School Basketball Enthusiasts!

South River EMC, along with North Carolina's Touchstone Energy cooperatives, is partnering with North Carolina State University and the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill to offer educational and athletic opportunities for rising sixth through eighth graders this summer.

Middle school students statewide are encouraged to apply for 50 all-expenses-paid scholarships to attend basketball camp: boys can apply for the Roy Williams camp at UNC and girls can apply for the Kellie Harper camp at NCSU.

One student will be selected to attend each camp courtesy of South River EMC.

Kellie Harper, coach of the Wolfpack women's basketball team, and Roy Williams, coach of the 2009 NCAA National Champions the Carolina Tar Heel men's basketball team, will each instruct campers with the help of staff and current players.

Not only does the program allow North Carolina middle school students to spend time on a college campus, it also gives them the opportunity to receive individual and group instruction from two successful collegiate coaches to enhance their basketball skills.

Applications will be accepted through March 31. Winners will be announced May 1.

Recipients of the Touchstone Energy Kellie Harper Basketball Camp scholarship will attend the overnight camp in Raleigh from June 20-23. Recipients of the Touchstone Energy Roy Williams

Basketball Camp scholarship will attend the overnight camp in Chapel Hill from June 19-23. Campers must have permission from a parent or guardian to attend camp and must provide their own transportation to and from camp.

Eligible students interested in the scholarship can contact Julie Wahl at (910) 892-8071, ext. 2151, or download an application form at www.sremc.com.

Applicants will be evaluated on their academics, extra-curricular activities and an essay that must accompany the application.



Kellie Harper and SREMC scholarship winner Lauren Mulier in 2009.

Grants Available Through Operation Round Up

South River EMC is accepting applications for Operation Round Up grants. They are due to the Cooperative office by February 19 for the March funding cycle. Decisions will be made in early March.

Applications are available in both South River EMC offices and online for those local nonprofit agencies that need help funding their newest program, schools and individuals/families. Please be sure to read the guidelines thoroughly and when completing an application have all required information complete and all the appropriate attachments and signatures.

Individuals must be members of South River EMC and can apply for a \$1,000 grant once every

five years. Agencies must provide services to areas served by South River EMC and can apply annually for up to \$5,000.

Educational institutions in Harnett, Cumberland, Sampson and Johnston counties may apply for up to \$10,000 annually to implement programs or purchase needed equipment to facilitate a program, which bolsters the educational experience of students in our communities.

Grants will be reviewed by the Community Assistance Corporation each March, June, September and December. For more information visit www.sremc.com/roundup.aspx.



Prevent Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Around Your Home

You can't see or smell carbon monoxide, but at high levels it can be very dangerous, even deadly. Carbon monoxide, or CO, is a colorless, odorless gas produced by any burning fuel such as, natural gas, oil, propane, kerosene, wood or charcoal.

Carbon monoxide is produced by common household appliances and equipment. When not properly ventilated, carbon monoxide emitted by these appliances can build up. Prevention is the key to avoiding carbon monoxide poisoning. Keep these tips in mind to avoid CO danger:

- Make certain your flues and chimneys are connected to the outside, in good condition and not blocked. Leaking and unvented chimneys can release CO into your home.
- Vent appliances outside and ensure they function properly to prevent CO buildup inside the home.
- Never use a gas range, oven or dryer for heating, even for a short time. CO builds up quickly in enclosed spaces.
- Read and follow the instructions of your fuel-burning devices.
- Never sleep in a room with an unvented gasoline or kerosene space heater.
- Don't idle a car in the garage, even if the garage door is open, because fumes can quickly build up.
- Never use charcoal grills

indoors, not even in the fireplace or garage. Carbon monoxide from burning and smoldering charcoal can be deadly if used indoors for cooking or heating.

Carbon monoxide is harmful when breathed because it prevents oxygen from reaching your heart, brain and other vital organs. Symptoms vary widely from person to person. CO poisoning may occur sooner in: young children, the elderly, people with lung or heart disease, people at high altitudes or those who already have elevated CO blood levels, such as people who smoke. Also, CO poisoning poses a significant risk to unborn babies.

Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning may resemble those of the flu or food poisoning. At moderate levels symptoms include: headaches, dizziness, confusion, nausea or fainting. Low levels can cause shortness of breath, mild nausea or mild headaches. If you have any of these symptoms go outside and get fresh air immediately. You should then get to an emergency room and tell the physician you suspect CO poisoning.

Carbon monoxide detectors are available in stores. Buy a CO detector as a back-up, not as a replacement for proper use and maintenance of your fuel-burning appliances.

Following these tips and knowing the symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning will help you stay safe while heating your home this winter.





South River EMC's Touchstone Energy Savers

Agricultural Efficient Lighting Saves Energy, Money

You can save money and energy without sacrificing your animals' comfort, so give it a try!

South River EMC offers members a 25 percent rebate for the cost incurred by farmers to fully convert the lighting in hog, turkey and chicken houses from incandescent lighting to cold cathode or compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs).

Rebate is based solely on the cost of materials.

For more information visit www.sremc.com.



An Added Bonus Of A Water Heater Efficiency Kit

Faucet use accounts for 15.7% of an average household's daily water consumption.

Installing low-flow faucet aerators on bathroom and kitchen sinks saves water and energy, and lowers utility bills as well, since less hot water is used, this means less water being heated every day.

For \$12 you receive a water heater blanket, and as an added bonus, a kitchen sink aerator, two regular faucet aerators, pipe insulation and a water-efficient showerhead.

For an additional \$10, a South River EMC employee will install the kit for you.

If you would like more information or are interested in purchasing a kit, please call 910-892-8071 or send an e-mail to sremc@sremc.com.



CFLs Payback

Let South River EMC reward you for an energy-efficient practice.

Compact fluorescent lamps, or CFLs, save you money and energy, and work best in areas where the lights are used frequently, like a living room.

If you purchase energy saving CFLs, send South River EMC the receipt for a \$1 rebate for each bulb purchased.

Send your original receipt with the following information printed on it: name, South River EMC account number, mailing address and daytime telephone number. If not indicated on the receipt, please include the number of bulbs purchased.

Send receipts to:
South River EMC
CFL Rebate
PO Box 931
Dunn, NC 28335
For more information contact South River EMC at 910-892-8071.



Be sure that you follow these important steps when installing CFLs in your home:

- **Do the twist-** Screw in your CFL by holding the ballast (the white plastic part), NOT the glass tubing.
- **Choose 3 for 3-** Only use bulbs labeled as three-way in three-way sockets.
- **Don't dim a non-dimmable-** Only use bulbs labeled as dimmable with dimmer switches.
- **Check your controls-** Most photocells, motion sensors and electric timers are not designed to work with CFLs. Always check with the manufacturer of the control for compatibility.
- **Give them air indoors-** CFLs are sensitive to extreme temperatures, so place your CFLs in open fixtures indoors. Using them in enclosed fixtures indoors can create a hot environment that reduces the lifetime of your bulbs. Note that covered reflectors are best used in recessed cans.
- **Protect them outdoors-** Protect bulbs from the elements by placing them inside enclosed fixtures outdoors. For colder climates, look at the packaging for optimal operating temperatures.



Energy Star Appliances Mean Rebates For Members

An Energy Star dishwasher means you can wash more dishes for less. Energy Star-qualified dishwashers use 31 percent less energy and 33 percent less water.

Not only that, but South River EMC offers a \$25 rebate for the purchase of a new Energy Star-qualified electric clothes washer, refrigerator, freezer, dishwasher or programmable thermostat.

To receive a rebate you will need to send South River EMC your original receipt, the accompanying EnergyGuide, as well as the easy-to-complete application. The application can be found on our Web site at www.sremc.com, or by calling the office at 910-892-8071.



If you are thinking about purchasing an Energy Star appliance, waiting may put money in your pocket! If you purchase a clothes washer, dishwasher, refrigerator or freezer between April 22 - 25 you could receive additional savings of 15 percent from the North Carolina Energy Office. Watch

the *Communicator* for more information.

Is Solar Water Heating Right For You?

The first consideration when building a solar thermal system is the site. If your site has unshaded areas and generally faces south, it is a good candidate for a solar thermal system. A professional installer can evaluate your roof as a location for collectors. If your roof doesn't have enough space, you can also install the system on the ground. The amount of sun that your site receives, how often temperatures dip below freezing, and other factors will also affect the type of solar water heating system you choose.

Before getting under way, you need to consider your homeowners' association rules and neighborhood bylaws, also known as codes,



covenants, and restrictions (CC&Rs).

Some cities and counties have ordinances or require permits for home improvement construction, including solar water heating installation.

South River EMC offers members installing a solar water heater with an electric back up a \$1,000 rebate.

If you are interested in solar water heating, call our office at 910-230-2982, or for more information visit www.sremc.com/solarwater.aspx.

Additionally, the North Carolina Energy Office will be offering a \$200 mail-in rebate on the installation of a solar water heating unit starting June 1.

Your installation may qualify for federal tax credits, visit www.sremc.com/taxcredits.

Consider Purchasing An Energy Star Heat Pump

It may be time to replace your heat pump with an Energy Star-qualified model!

Energy Star-qualified heat pumps have a higher seasonal efficiency ratio (SEER) and heating seasonal performance factor (HSPF) than standard models, which makes them about 8 percent more efficient than standard new models and 20 percent more efficient than what you may have in your home.

South River EMC has a heat pump rebate to help you save money as well. If you've recently purchased, or are thinking of replacing your old unit with a higher efficiency one, you could earn \$200 to \$300 from South River EMC.

For more information visit www.sremc.com or call our office at 910-230-2982.

The North Carolina Energy Office will offer a \$300 mail-in rebate on high efficiency heat pumps starting June 1.

Your purchase may also qualify for federal tax incentives as well, visit www.sremc.com/taxcredits.





Second Refrigerator? Turn It In!

Did you know second refrigerators and freezers are large energy users and can cost from \$13-16 monthly? This program offers an incentive to members who dispose of an operational second refrigerator or freezer. Not only will the members receive a \$50 rebate, but they will save between \$166 and \$194 on their electric costs annually.

- Member must complete a refrigerator/freezer turn-in rebate application and submit it to South River EMC before taking appliance to recycling site.

- Once the application is accepted, an authorized agent of South River EMC will make an appointment and visit the member's facility.

- At the time of inspection, the member agrees to have the refrigerator/freezer plugged in and operating.

- Once the unit has been verified as operational, the unit will be prominently marked with an X and the cord will be removed.

- The member will be provided with a recycler verification form to take to an authorized recycling center.

- Once the appliance has been dropped off for recycling, the attendant will sign the agreement form and the member will return the form to South River EMC.

- Once the authorization form is received and processed, the member will receive a \$50 rebate within 30 days.

For more information visit www.sremc.com.



Save With An Energy Star Home

This is the time to purchase a home that saves energy and reduces your carbon footprint. How does an energy-efficient home do that? Energy used in homes often comes from the burning of fossil fuels at power plants, so the less energy you use, the less electricity that's generated. The easy way to make sure a new home is energy efficient is to look for the blue Energy Star mark, the government-backed symbol for energy efficiency.

To earn the Energy Star, a home must meet strict guidelines for energy efficiency set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. These homes are at least 15 percent more energy efficient than homes built to code, and generally include additional energy-saving features that typically make them 20-30 percent more efficient than standard homes.

Typical features to look for in Energy Star qualified homes include:

- An efficient home envelope, with effective levels of wall, floor and attic insulation properly

installed, comprehensive air barrier details, and high-performance windows;

- Efficient air distribution, where ducts are installed with minimum air leakage and are effectively insulated;

- Efficient equipment for heating, cooling, and water heating;

- Efficient lighting, including fixtures that earn the Energy Star; and

- Efficient appliances, including Energy Star qualified dishwashers, refrigerators and clothes washers.



South River EMC members who build or purchase a new Energy Star certified home, qualify for a rebate of \$350 to \$750. Additionally, they may qualify for state and federal tax credits.

For more information visit www.sremc.com or call our office at 910-230-2982.