



the South River EMC *communicator*

February 2017

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What You Might Miss Each April

Did you know every cooperative is required to conduct an annual meeting of the membership? The purpose is to hold the election for the board of directors, share important financial information, and of course—door prizes!

South River EMC's annual meeting is a community gathering where neighbors can catch up as they walk through our vendor bazaar. Each year we welcome local businesses to discuss their products with our members, and this year we will have some new businesses.

During this time we also offer snacks and drinks, along with musical entertainment. Members can enjoy the music as they visit the bazaar, enjoy their snacks, and even take a turn on the dance floor, if so inclined. Also available for viewing is the grand prize, a retired truck, given away each year at the conclusion of the business meeting.

Children are welcome at the annual meeting and can enjoy time in the children's area while you attend the business meeting.

South River EMC's annual meeting is designed to take care of the important business of your co-op and the equally important business of building a real sense of community. All cooperatives serve both an economic and social purpose. While safe, reliable and affordable electric

power is crucial to our mission, improving the quality of life for all members is at the core of what we do every day.

If you haven't attended the annual meeting in the past, or if it has been a few years, we urge you to take the time to be with your fellow co-op members.

South River EMC is connected to you by more than just power lines. We are your neighbors, and we look forward to seeing you at your annual meeting.

The annual meeting is Thursday, April 20, with doors opening at 6 p.m. at the Crown Theatre and Arena in Fayetteville.

We will have entertainment, snacks, and a children's play area, and the Cooperative business meeting begins at 7:30 p.m.

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Coming Soon: Lower Rates

South River EMC will implement an overall four percent rate reduction, effective April 1. Residential members can expect to save around \$96 annually with the new rates. The rate change is the result of lower fuel costs, especially in the natural gas sector, and cost-saving measures implemented by the Cooperative, including:

- Refinancing of Cooperative debt from RUS to CFC
- Streamlined inventory process
- Improved right-of-way clearing
- Deployment of new technology strategies

- Conversion of outdoor lighting to LED
- Streamlining of several internal processes

"We have taken great strides to reduce our operating costs to be good stewards of the members' cooperative," said CEO and Executive Vice President Chris Spears. "This rate decrease is the first I have had the pleasure of being part of in my long career with the cooperatives."

We will continue to provide additional information about this change leading up to the implementation.



Nominations Made By Committee

The South River EMC nominating committee met on January 3 to make nominations for the election of directors to be held during the 2017 Annual Meeting of Members on April 20 at the Crown Center in Fayetteville.

Prior to the meeting, the committee met to review their responsibilities and to review the bylaws and the Cooperative's policy 632, Qualifications for

Directors. The initial meeting and extra materials are all intended to help the committee make the best possible decision.

South River EMC Attorney Cecil "Bo" Jones is the committee's chairperson and Iris Lucas is secretary.

The following members have been nominated:

District 1: Kelly Harrington
District 2: Sue Flowers
At Large: George Williams

Terms of office for directors are staggered so only three expire each year.

The ways which directors may be elected:

1. By petition. Any 150 members of the Cooperative, acting together, may make nominations in writing, listing the nominees separately with respect to the particular term and the particular directorate district from which they are nominated, not less than 40 business days prior to the meeting.

2. From nominations by a committee on nominations.

2017 Nominating Committee Members:

District 1 - Van Buie
District 2 - Raylon Wood
District 3 - Iris Lucas
District 4 - Johnnie Baggett
District 5 - Anthony "Tony" Warren
District 6 - Carol Hudson
District 7 - Wayne Collier Jr.
District 8 - Walter Clark
At Large - Alexander Eastman



Have You Earned A's This Report Card Period?

South River EMC will hold a "Give Us An A" drawing on February 6.

The drawing is held for students achieving at least one A on their report card.

Each of the 15 students whose names are drawn receive a \$25 gift card.

The program is open to students who are members, or children of members, of South River EMC. Just make a copy of the most recent

report card with at least one A and send it to the Cooperative.

You must include the member's



name, South River EMC account number and a daytime phone number, report cards will not be accepted without this information.

Report cards should be sent to:

South River EMC

"Give Us An A"

PO Box 931

Dunn, NC 28335

Or scanned and e-mailed to connections@sremc.com.

Interested In Basketball Camp?

Do you have a child that is currently in fifth, sixth or seventh grade and enjoys basketball?

South River EMC is offering a unique opportunity to students with the Touchstone Energy Sports Camp Scholarships. These scholarships give students like yours, the ability to attend basketball camps on two of the state's largest college campuses.



Roy Williams and Spencer Hales 2016

Your student is encouraged to apply for an all-expenses-paid scholarship to attend the Roy Williams Basketball Camp at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (June 17-21) or the Wolfpack Women's Basketball Academy at North Carolina State University in Raleigh (June 11-14).

The overnight camps are held in the summer, and campers work closely with coaches and players to develop fundamental skills, helping them perform and excel both on and off the court.

Campers must:

- Be a rising sixth, seventh or eighth grader (at the time of the basketball camp).
- Attend a school in the Cooperative service area. If unsure, please contact the Cooperative.
- Have permission from a parent or guardian to attend. An information sheet must be signed.
- Provide their own transportation to and from camp.

Winners will attend the camps courtesy of South River EMC. The

Cooperative funds one scholarship to each camp.

Applicants are judged on academics, extracurricular activities and writings that must accompany the application.

The application period runs



Wes Moore and Jenna McLamb 2016

from January 2 to March 31.

Eligible students interested in the scholarship can contact Julie McLeod at 910-892-8071, ext. 2151, or download an application from sremc.com/content/basketball-camps.

Electric Vehicle Workshop In February

Electric vehicles are a popular subject in our energy-conscious world. With many options and considerations, we are offering a workshop on the following topics:

- Electric vehicle and charging overview
- Testament of an EV owner
- Q & A
- Electric vehicle showcase and test drive
- What's next?

South River EMC- 6491 Ramsey St., Fayetteville
Tuesday, February 21, at 6 p.m.
RSVP to: pluginnc.com/events/southeriver
(RSVPs are not necessary, but appreciated.)

Training Enforces Safety Practices

Recently, South River EMC employees participated in Speak Up! Listen Up! training.

Presented to all Cooperative employees over four days, this program was developed in collaboration with 16 of the world's leading companies to foster a safe working environment by helping employees overcome anxiety associated with giving or receiving safety-related feedback.

On the job an employee might see a potentially dangerous situation, but won't speak up, because their supervisor is in charge of the action. Speak Up! Listen Up! gave Cooperative employees tools and processes for communicating constructively.

The program helps employees learn how to give safety-related feedback to coworkers, teaching that each employee can contribute

to workplace safety by learning simple, easy-to-use feedback techniques. It's essential that you focus on the facts to tell it like it is.

The program also explores how people often confuse suggestions with criticism, and why so many people miss the real message. By focusing on the message, not the messenger, and committing to making changes, we contribute to the development of a positive safety culture.



The Cooperative provided the training to strengthen the Cooperative employees' safety culture, ensuring that two-way communication occurs between employees. The training was provided to keep everyone focused and on target to perform jobs as safely as possible.

South River EMC also expects this training to reinforce safety practices outside of work as well. How many times do people cut corners at home or neglect to properly secure something before setting in to finish a job?

Our culture of safety is to ensure each employee and member is kept safe each and every day while we continue to provide safe, reliable electric service.

At The Heart Of The Community

South River EMC's business is providing electricity, but our heart is in empowering our members and building the communities we serve. If you're looking for a meaningful relationship, consider the love we all have for the community and committing yourself to join us in building a better community for all.

COMMITTED TO OUR MEMBERS:

You might wonder why we, a business that sells electricity, provides you with tips and tools to use less of what we sell. It's because cooperative businesses are not-for-profit and exist to provide exceptional service to members, rather than to make a profit.

That means giving you the tools you need to make informed energy decisions that can lead to more manageable family budgets. We are not a Wall Street corporation; we are locally owned and operated, so we know how important it is to stick to a budget. That's why we offer programs like the SmartEnergy Profile, which gives you an overview each month of how your energy was used. Another item is SmartView, which enables you to receive daily updates on your energy use. Your Cooperative looks out for you.



COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY:

South River EMC and its employees have big hearts for service and giving back to others. We support food, coat, school and supply drives throughout the year.

You, our members, have big hearts, too. Through the



Operation Round Up program, South River EMC members have joined together to contribute \$1.67 million to support our neighbors and communities in need. Local schools have received funding to implement programs to engage students, as well as updating equipment for use in the classrooms. Non-profit organizations have used funds to offer life-sustaining services, health and welfare programs and cultural and historic enhancement for our communities.

Through our Bright Ideas educational grant program, local teachers receive funding for innovative projects to help students achieve success. And right now, we're accepting applications for Touchstone Energy Sports Camp scholarships that will send two local students to basketball camps on college campuses. With these programs and others, not only are we spreading the love to our members and organizations, but to children, which are the

future of our community. Each year, South River EMC awards gift cards to students whose names are drawn for having at least one 'A' on their report card. Not only that, but the Cooperative also works with the Fayetteville SwampDogs to provide scholarships to baseball camp, as well as awarding several college scholarships.

SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESSES AND ECONOMIES:

At the same time, South River EMC is investing to help our communities grow and thrive. We support local events and charities, as well as working to provide supplies and information during disasters. Many of the local fire and rescue squads have been recipients of grants from the Cooperative as well.



South River EMC was founded in 1940 when neighbors worked together to raise poles, string lines, and bring electricity to the people and farms of our area. Our members have always been the reason for our existence. Much has changed in the last 77 years, but our cooperative vision stands unchanged: Achieving excellence, empowering members.

TOGETHERWE SAVE.COM

Purchasing The Right Water Heater For You

After heating or cooling, water heating is the next greatest energy cost in the home. Having an efficient system is the first step in saving not only energy, but money as well.

There are many options: a standard electric; a tank less; a heat pump; or a solar water heater. Select a standard unit and you won't see much of a difference in cost over your current unit.

With a tank less system, you could see savings of anywhere from 8 to 34 percent depending on your family's water use. However, as a demand based system, you will see an energy spike when water is needed, since it's produced on demand.

A heat pump water heater helps save energy over its lifetime, but comes with a slightly higher price tag. These systems save energy by using electricity to move heat from one place to another instead of generating it directly. They must remain in the 40 to 90 degree range and require about 1,000 cubic feet of space.

Solar water heating is the most efficient option. However, you have to have the ability to install a system, so verify covenants allow it. Make sure you have a good solar resource, which means having enough solar power to supply you with the warm water you need. Make sure to speak with at least one

certified installer with references before agreeing to anything.

If you're in the market for a new water heater, it's never too early to research. The Cooperative rebates \$200 on a heat pump water heater less than 50 gallons in size, as well as \$150 on a solar water heater installation.

For complete details or to receive an application, visit sremc.com or call 910-892-8071 x 2152.



Insulation And Weatherization Updates Help All

Are you looking for ways to cut energy costs? As you read energy saving tip after tip, remember heating and cooling.

No matter how many light bulbs you change, nor how many appliances you unplug, the biggest energy cost is heating and cooling your home.

This is important, because your everyday practices impact these costs. For example, if you feel cool in your home, what do you do? Grab a blanket or adjust the thermostat. Changing the thermostat means your system runs longer, a higher energy cost.

This coolness could be the result of air infiltration or heat transfer.

Air infiltration, the introduction of outside air in and vice versa is normal, but too much is uncomfortable. By weatherstripping and caulking problem areas of your home you can improve comfort and costs.

Heat transfer is the result of insufficient insulation. With little or no insulation, heat moves from a warm area, such as your house, to a cooler area, to try and even out the temperature. As you can imagine, this results in uncomfortable temperatures. By installing or replacing insulation, you can improve comfort and lower energy costs.

Single family homes are eligible for the following rebates:

- Air sealing \$75
- Attic/roof insulation \$75

Manufactured homes are eligible for the following rebates:

- Air sealing (HP*) \$100
- Air sealing (EF**) \$200
- Duct sealing (HP) \$100
- Duct sealing (EF) \$200
- Roof insulation (HP) \$100
- Roof insulation (EF) \$200
- Floor insulation (HP) \$100
- Floor insulation (EF) \$200

If you receive a weatherization package performed by an agency such as Community Action you could be eligible for a \$200 bill credit.

For complete details, visit sremc.com or call 910-892-8071 x 2222.

*HP= heat pump

**EF= electric furnace

TOGETHERWESAVE.COM

Thermostat Programming On The Go

What kind of thermostat do you have in your home? Is it digital, programmable, smart? Are you now wondering why that's even important?

A digital thermostat has a digital display, but does not have the ability to schedule settings.

A programmable thermostat is digital, and allows the homeowner to set a temperature schedule. For example, if your family is generally out of the house from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.,

you can set the thermostat lower in the winter, and the heating and cooling system will not cycle on as much, while no one is there to benefit. Then set it to come up to a comfortable temperature at about 3 p.m., to be at that temperature upon your return.

The smart thermostat is a step up from the programmable thermostat. You can interact with a smart thermostat using your cell phone or tablet, as

long as you have a wireless connection. This allows you to make changes to settings even when you aren't at home. Before purchasing a smart thermostat, make sure it's compatible with your heating and cooling system.

Smart thermostats are eligible for a \$20 bill credit from South River EMC. For more information visit sremc.com or call 910-892-8071 x 2152.

Is It Time To Replace Your Old Unit?

Don't sit and wonder when your heating and cooling system will need to be replaced. Keep an eye out for some telltale signs.

If your heating and cooling system is more than 10 years old, consider a replacement. Installed correctly, a high-efficiency system can save up to 20 percent on heating and cooling costs. The average lifespan of a heat pump is 10 to 15 years, so around this time begin considering your options.

If your equipment needs frequent or costly repairs and your energy bills are on the rise, consider a replacement. Repeated repairs or having to make a costly repair make purchasing a new system the best option. As systems age, no matter how often they're serviced, they grow inefficient. There's nothing to be done, but to replace a system when it gets too costly to run or repair.

If your home has excessive dust. Leaky ducts can pull par-

ticles and air from attics, crawl spaces and basements and distribute them throughout your house. Leaky ductwork is typically a cause of air loss, meaning increased energy costs.

If your heating or cooling system is noisy, it could mean you have an undersized duct system or a problem with the indoor coil of your cooling equipment. That means your energy use at home would be above average leading to higher electric bills.

Efficiency is measured by the seasonal energy efficiency rating, or SEER, which measures cooling efficiency. As you know, when it's hot you want that cool air blowing. Having an efficient system helps members save in that it is efficient when providing for your heating and cooling needs, typically at a lower cost than your current system. So when replacing a system, do so with a high efficiency system, like a 17 SEER or greater.

South River EMC rebates on efficient heating and cooling systems of 17 SEER or greater:

Air source HP replacing an HP:* \$200

*Air source HP replacing an EF**:* \$400

Geothermal HP 17.1 EER (replacement or new): \$250

Geothermal HP replacing an EF (17.1 EER or greater): \$500

Ductless mini-split HP replacing a HP: \$200

Ductless mini-split HP replacing an EF: \$400

For more information or to receive an application, visit sremc.com or call 910-892-8071 x 2152.

* HP = heat pump

** EF = electric furnace



The HERO Home, Saving Energy And Money

A high-efficiency residential option, or HERO, home is a good choice if you're in the market to buy or build.

HERO homes require slightly better insulation, windows, air sealing, equipment, and lighting packages to deliver a 30 percent savings compared to homes built to North Carolina's standard building code.

There are two ways to build a HERO home:

- *The prescriptive path* involves complying fully with specific requirements for things like insulation, lighting, window U-factors, whole house tightness and duct leakage testing,

among other things.

- *The performance path* requires an energy cost analysis as proof that the home being built will have energy costs less than or equal to that same home built to the HERO Code's prescriptive requirements. The performance path does **not** allow for HVAC or water heating trade offs to be HERO Code compliant.

To ensure your home meets HERO requirements, we recommend you read the North Carolina Energy Conservation Code, found at energycodes.gov.

Contractors who build a new HERO certified home that re-

ceives electricity from South River EMC are eligible to receive a \$400 rebate*.

Members who purchase a new HERO certified home are eligible to receive a \$200 rebate*. Those who have a HERO home custom built are eligible to receive a \$600 rebate*.

* Homes must be checked for compliance by a licensed independent HERS rater and all appropriate paperwork submitted for rebate.

For more information, visit sremc.com or call 910-892-8071 x 2222.

It's a Major Appliance, Do The Research

Are you in the market for a major appliance? Remember, unlike a rug, lamp, or clothes, you can't take it back—at least not easily, so do your research. Avoid buyer's remorse with these tips:

Learn from other's mistakes. Friends are usually all too willing to share their appliance-related delights and disappointments.

Know thyself. Just because you watch Top Chef doesn't mean you are one. Select appliances which fit your needs.

Read the fine print. If you find yourself unfolding a sheet of paper with type so small you can't read the words after "CAUTION," or you're lost in the programming instructions, this isn't your appliance.

Never fall for a pretty face. Don't buy an entire suite of ap-

pliances because you love the matching handles. When the ice maker springs a leak, you'll no longer recall the magic you felt on sight.

Listen carefully. Never compare models without comparing decibel levels. What good is a new appliance if you never use it because of the noise?

Get the right size for your equipment. Appliance cavities come in different heights and sizes, so make sure appliances can fit your equipment.

Do a door inspection. Refrigerator doors can open on the left or right, so resist a deal if they open on the wrong side. Beware doors that stick so firmly it's difficult for anyone to open them.

Measure three times, buy once. Don't place orders for appliances that won't fit in their

allotted space—assuming it doesn't get stuck getting to that space. Measure.

Don't impulse buy. Make a list of priority features and carry it with you so you can comparison shop for the best model with the best combination of features at the best price.

Place purchasing an Energy Star certified appliance on your list because Energy Star certified refrigerators, clothes washers, dehumidifiers and clothes dryers are eligible for a \$10 bill credit.

For more information, visit sremc.com or call 910-892-8071 x 2152.

