



the South River EMC *Communicator*

July 2017

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Something Special

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Electric Vehicles

TogetherWeSave

Disaster Deepens Relationships

The tornado that touched down in Autryville wreaked havoc on many residents; particularly visible in news coverage was the Autryville Fire Department.

Chief Andrew Hawkins pointed over the back corner of the building and explained, "It came from this corner, and by the time the guys who were here got inside, it was on the station, and they took cover under the trucks."

Those seven firefighters made it out safely, but what greeted them, and the firemen who arrived soon after, was destruction.

Following the storm, only one fire truck remained in service to serve roughly 200 people in town, as well as the 1,100 people in the service district. Not only was there a loss of engines, but equipment as well.

"We have trucks on loan from neighboring, and not-so neighboring areas," said Hawkins.

Fire departments have loaned equipment, from their engines to uniforms, because the Autryville department's

equipment inventory is a total loss.

"They've found pieces of equipment at least 15 miles away and even farther," he said. "It's unusable though, so we're going to work on fixing that."

Right now the department has a three-phase plan. Initially, they plan to construct a temporary station to use for up to a year. Another goal is to get their equipment operational, or replace what needs to be replaced. The final stage is returning "back to normal," meaning there are trucks, equipment and a facility in Autryville.

The firehouse in Autryville is the hub of activity, and its absence is hard for the whole community.

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South River EMC
offices will be closed
Tuesday, July 4, in
celebration of the
Fourth of July.

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Being Part of Something Special



MESSAGE FROM

CEO Chris Spears

By being part of an electric cooperative, you are part of something special. You are more than just a customer, you are an owner of a not-for-profit utility.

MEMBER VS. CUSTOMER

More of you identify with being a member than those members at the majority of cooperatives across the country. According to a recent study, 32.5 percent of South River EMC members identify with being a member/owner, while only 28.7 percent of cooperative members across the country identify in this manner. Conversely, 53.88 percent of you identify as a customer only. This is a number we hope to lower as we want you to understand that you are more than a customer to us.

MEMBER SATISFACTION

Studies have shown that people who identify as being part of something tend to be more satisfied with an organization than if they feel they are "just a customer." This has proven to be true with South River EMC. For the first quarter (January through March), we had an overall

satisfaction score of 8.59 out of 10. Respondents who had some member identity had a satisfaction score of 9.29 versus those who viewed themselves as customers who had a score of 8.06. We want to continue to see those numbers increase and we want you to know you are not our customer, you are a member – you make our cooperative special.

MONEY BACK

As a not-for-profit utility, we give money back! You might've noticed that you have had a Member Advantage Credit on your bills since April.

This is because we had excess money, so we returned it to our members.

We don't make profits; instead, at the end of each year after all bills are paid, any remaining amount, called margins, are allocated to be refunded to the members as capital credits. Once we completed our audit for 2016, the allocation of the margins was made. Our end-of-year margins totaled \$5,811,876.15 or 0.0615168335 percent of revenues. What does this mean to you? If your electric bills in 2016 totaled \$1,000, then you would be earmarked to receive a refund of \$61.51 — \$15.38 in November and the remaining \$46.13 in 19 years. The amount that is retained for 19 years is used as operating capital by the Cooperative.

Our vision statement reads: Achieving Excellence, Empowering Members. These aren't empty words, but our

promise to you as an owner of your Cooperative.

EXCELLENCE IN ACTION

Because we are dedicated to excellence, we want to ensure that our employees are recognized when they deliver service to you that you believe is outstanding.

We have launched a program called Excellence in Action. If you have an interaction with one of our employees and you want us to know about it, please let us know. There are many ways you can do this. You can complete a card

"You are more than just a customer, you are an owner of a not-for-profit utility."

that is available in our lobby or visit sremc.com and complete an Excellence in Action form, which can be found at the bottom right side of our home page. Once we receive an EIA card from a member, the employee will be recognized in front of their peers for their commitment to our members to deliver excellent service.

Our Mission: South River EMC is a premier locally-owned and operated electric cooperative with a mission to provide safe, reliable, competitively-priced electricity. We are committed to achieving excellence and empowering our members. We are dedicated to high standards of performance and integrity. The cooperative's No. 1 priority is our members.

Cool Off With Bright Ideas This Summer

Teachers, we're in full summer swing, but that doesn't mean you haven't had some bright ideas.

Now is the perfect time to grab your laptop or tablet and complete a Bright Ideas grant application.

The Bright Ideas program offers grants up to \$2,500 to teachers with innovative classroom based ideas in public K-12 schools. The application period is currently open.

North Carolina's electric cooperatives have awarded \$10.9 million in grants used to fund 10,400 projects affecting 2.1 million students, since the project's inception in 1994. This year, South River EMC will top the \$1 million mark in grants awarded through the Bright Ideas program.

Applications are being accepted



online at ncbrightideas.com through September 18. Educators who have applications submitted by August 15, our early bird deadline, are eligible to win a \$100 Visa gift card.

Don't delay, early application submission could pay off. Not enough time? You don't have to complete your application in one

sitting, you can save and return to update and complete. Make sure to submit it by September 18.

Good luck to all the educators out there, and remember ncbrightideas.com to start your application, or you can visit sremc.com for more information or to see previously funded grants.

How UtilityShield Helps You

As a homeowner, you are responsible for certain lines on your property.

You might not think twice when you take a shower, prepare supper, or flip a light switch, but each

time you perform these tasks, your property's electric wiring, plumbing, or gas lines are at work. Over time these lines, like most things, could fail; leaving you with the cost of repairs.

That's right, those lines are usually not covered by your homeowner's insurance. And when they fail, it's not often catastrophic, but it can be inconvenient and costly.

To help, South River EMC has partnered with IGS Energy, to bring members the UtilityShield program.

UtilityShield is a service agreement that provides repair

or replacement service for participants when a protected item within your home fails or leaks due to normal wear and tear or inherent defects in material or craftsmanship. The type of coverage depends on the type of plan you purchase.

A typical outside line repair call can easily exceed \$1,000, which most homeowners don't have just lying around. However a UtilityShield protection plan can help ease that burden.

In the case of your electric lines, South River EMC will repair issues up to your meter base, anything after that is your responsibility as a member.

Visit southriveremc.utilityshield.com to read more about plans, or call 888-974-0112.



TORNADO, cont. from page A

“Being the people who provide services during these kinds of events, it’s hard to sit back and let others help you,” said Hawkins. “But, it has been amazing how the community has gathered around us to help.”

Perhaps it’s payback for when Hurricane Matthew rolled through last year, the fire department provided ice, charging stations, and more.

In early June, Autryville had a fundraiser for the department, and the fire department invited the Cape Fear Valley Blood Donor Transport to encourage people to give back to the communities that helped them.

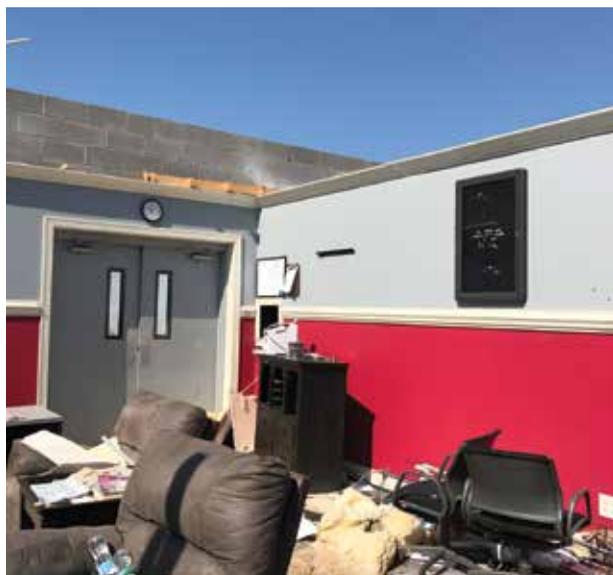
At this time, crews are working out of a mobile response unit, on loan from the Fayetteville Fire Department, and a tent.

Most immediate, they are preparing the site for demolition. Firefighters and members of the community have been clearing debris to get ready to begin rebuilding. It will be a slow process however, there are plenty of people who want to help the Autryville fire department come back stronger than ever. The department recently received a \$10,000 Operation Round Up grant to purchase turnout gear.

“Our guys have done amazing,” Hawkins said. “It’s been stressful, and things won’t just happen tomorrow, but the job goes on.”



Above: Chief Hawkins shows the bent radio tower.



Above: A photo from inside in the station.

Right: Looking into the building from outside the front door.



Students Of All Ages Eligible For 'Give Us An A'

As students enjoy the long days of summer, report cards are almost completely forgotten.

However, South River EMC would like to recognize 15 students who received at least one A on his or her recent report card.

The "Give Us An A" program, randomly selects 15 students, with at least

one A on his or her report card, to receive a \$25 gift card.

That's right, a student who is a member or the child of a member is eligible for participation.

Report cards should be submitted to the Cooperative by Thursday, July 6 at 5 p.m.

Report cards must include the South River EMC member's name, mailing address, account number and

daytime telephone number. If this information is not located on the report card, the report card will not be entered.

All ready? Mail your report card containing at least one A to:

South River EMC
Give Us An A
PO Box 931
Dunn, NC 28335
Email: connections@sremc.com



Camp Dates Still Up For Grabs In July

Students between the ages of 5- 12 who love baseball might be interested in the SwampDogs Kid's Camp.

South River EMC has partnered with the Fayetteville SwampDogs to sponsor baseball camps for students in that age range this summer.

Students can enter for a chance to win a scholarship for a day at one of the Fayetteville SwampDogs day camps being held July 14 and July 26 at J.P. Riddle Stadium in

Fayetteville.

South River EMC is offering four scholarships for each camp day. To apply for a scholarship, please mail or e-mail the following information to our office: student's name, address, age and daytime phone number.

Mail to:

South River EMC
Camp Scholarship
PO Box 931
Dunn, NC 28335

E-mail: connections@sremc.com

Put "camp scholarship" on the subject line. Be sure to include a note for which camp date(s) the child should be entered, it is unnecessary to send multiple submissions for each camp day.

Submission deadlines are July 7 and July 19.



Scholarships only cover the cost of the camp. Parents or guardians are responsible for transportation to and from the stadium the day of camp, which runs from about 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Lunch and a snack will be provided. Campers are allowed to bring their own equipment, although they are not required to do so.

Interested in attending camp? Register at goswampdogs.com. If not selected, your child can attend the camp one day for \$50, two days for \$90, or all three days for \$120.





Operation Round Up Helps Hundreds

The Community Assistance Corporation, or CAC, awarded \$36,595 in grants in June. These grants go to non-profit organizations and educational institutions in the South River EMC service area.

Receiving funding this time were:

- ⊙ Gray's Creek Volunteer Fire Dept. Station 24: \$5,000
- ⊙ Piney Grove Volunteer Fire Dept., Sampson County: \$3,440
- ⊙ Transitions Life Care: \$5,000
- ⊙ Godwin-Falcon Fire Dept.: \$2,050

- ⊙ Camp Tuscarora Boy Scouts of America: \$5,000
- ⊙ Tri-County Community Health Council Inc.: \$3,000
- ⊙ Autryville Fire Dept.: \$10,000
- ⊙ Midway Middle School: \$3,105
- ⊙ Clement Civic Center: \$5,000*

*This money was pledged in March, and after submitting the appropriate paperwork, the civic center will receive the funds.

Don't know much about Operation Round Up? How it works is that participating members have their electric bill rounded up to the next dollar

monthly. This can be as little as 1¢ or as much as 99¢, but typically equals no more than \$6 a year. The money goes into a fund controlled by the CAC, which is composed of South River EMC members.

Decisions are made quarterly to fund programs which affect the South River EMC communities.

More information on Operation Round Up can be found at sremc.com, under the My Community tab.

The Changing Landscape of Electric Vehicles

A few years ago you could count the number of electric vehicles available on one hand, with fingers to spare. Since that time, great strides have been made to meet an ever growing and changing customer market.

Your options start with the type of car: a plug-in hybrid electric vehicle, or PHEV, or an all electric vehicle, or EV. PHEVs have a smaller battery with an all-electric range of 10-50 miles, with a gasoline back-up. EVs vary by model, but most can go a range of 70 to 100 miles on one charge, battery only.

Where there was once just a Prius, there's now a Leaf, an i8, a Volt, and that's barely scraping the surface. Each manufacturer has at least one electric vehicle in its fleet, or is working to add one.

And with at least 92 of North Carolina's 100 counties having registered electric vehicles, North Carolinians are recognizing the

benefits of driving electric with a 433 percent growth in a three year period.

MONEY IN YOUR POCKET:

If you drive 12,000 miles in a year, an EV can save you over

\$1,300 a year in fuel savings alone!

PHEVs don't produce emissions when in all-electric mode, and they're cleaner even when the emission from the generation of electricity is considered.

EVs are fueled with locally generated electricity, not imported oil. Being wholly dependent on petroleum results in the U.S. spending over \$1 billion per day on foreign oil. Electricity generation in the U.S. uses a mix of domestic sources, and only one percent comes from oil.

If you're interested in an EV or PHEV might be something to look into, visit manufacturers' web sites to see what's available and what kind of deals they offer on electric vehicle purchases.

After all, a federal tax credit up to \$7,500 is already offered on the purchase of electric vehicles.



TOGETHERWESAVE.COM

A Good Thermostat Can Make All The Difference

A good thermostat can save you money on your electric costs, and keep your home comfortable. Many thermostats on the market are easy to install, customizable, and flexible.

But does that make them right for you? A smart thermostat is your best option. They can take care of those, "I forgot to set the thermostat" moments, by communicating through your Wi-Fi. Also, adapting to your habits and

and making adjustments accordingly.

It's true a good thermostat can save you money, but that doesn't happen when you purchase and install it.

By making changes and adjustments, perhaps raising the thermostat temperature a little in the summer, your thermostat can help you save. However, if you make no changes to your thermostat, energy savings won't occur.



Smart thermostats are eligible for a \$20 rebate. Read more about this by visiting sremc.com or calling 910-892-8071 x 2152.

Whether You Run Hot Or Cold, Do So Efficiently

By purchasing a high efficiency system, you can cut down on energy costs, because the higher the seasonal energy efficiency ratio, or SEER, rating, the more efficient a heating and cooling system.

Areas with high summer temperatures look at a higher SEER rating because it measures the cooling efficiency of the unit,

and if there's one thing you want every summer, it's to be cool.

So if your heat pump is getting older, or you want to get rid of that electric furnace, consider a high efficiency electric heat pump. South River EMC rebates on at least 17 SEER units or greater. Systems can be air source, dual fuel hybrid, mini split and geothermal, but they

must be at least 17 SEER, geothermal need to be 17.1 EER.

Rebates are available and vary from \$200-\$500, depending on your current unit and the energy-efficient replacement. For more information or to receive an application, visit sremc.com or call 910-892-8071 x 2152.

High Speed Isn't Always The Best Speed

If you have a pool, you know it has positives and negatives. It's great to just go out in your yard and enjoy, however the costs to run it can add up.

One of the best ways to save money with your pool is by replacing the pump.



Most pools come standard with a single-speed pump. These pumps are cheap, but costly to run, as it runs at one speed for all occasions, which is unnecessary.

Replacing it with a variable or two speed pump could save energy by offering varying speed options for different pool activities. Lower speeds use less water and energy to perform tasks, but with a variable to two speed system, you can also maximize the speed and water

for those activities that require it.

Another thing to remember is not to run your pool pump all the time. Run it for its purposes, but once chemicals or salt are mixed in, and everything is clean, give it a rest. This helps save energy as well.

South River EMC offers a \$50 rebate on the purchase of a variable- or two-speed pool pump. For more information visit sremc.com or call 910-892-8071 x 2152.

Appliances Can Be Your Friend, Not Foe

Each of us has a space full of appliances somewhere. Appliances cost money to run, but with Energy Star certified appliances it could cost you

less. Using less energy, and less water than standard appliances, you could be saving money.

South River EMC offers a \$10 rebate on Energy Star certified

refrigerators, clothes washers, clothes dryers, and dehumidifiers. For more information or an application, visit sremc.com or call 910-892-8071 x 2152.

Cool Off Water Heating Costs

If you're looking for ways to cut costs, look no further than your water heater. A standard electric water heater isn't the most efficient option.

With energy efficient units like solar and heat pump water heaters, you could be saving energy and money when it's time to replace.

Solar water heaters use the sun to warm water, meaning you need a good solar resource. Verify you can install a

system, some building covenants prevent it. Then, assess if your family uses enough water to make the system a good investment. If you're getting positive answers, South River EMC offers a \$150 rebate on a solar water heater.

If solar water heating isn't for you, there's the heat pump water heater, or HPWH. These systems use electricity to move heat from one place to another instead of generating it directly,

making them two to three times more efficient than a standard electric water heater. They require installation in locations that remain in the 40-90 degree range year-round and provide at least 1,000 cubic feet of space around the water heater. HPWHs of less than 50 gallons are eligible for a \$200 rebate.

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

Weekend Project: Caulk And Insulate

Weather stripping, caulking and insulating your home can save you energy, money and improve comfort.

These items prevent air infiltration, or the loss of inside air, outside and vice versa, as well as heat transfer. Heat flows from warmer spaces to cooler, to create more ambient temperatures; however, this can be uncomfortable for you.

In the winter, that means you lose heat, and in the summer, you gain it. The complete opposite of what you want to happen. Insulation has an R-value, which measures its resistance to heat transfer, the higher the value, the higher the resistance. Visit energy.gov to see recom-

mended insulation R-values. Sometimes insulation needs moved around, or replaced. Replacement could make you eligible for rebate.

Air infiltration isn't new and it isn't unusual, but too much makes you uncomfortable. By caulking and weather stripping you can help prevent air infiltration, making your home more comfortable.

South River EMC offers rebates on improvements:

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

A weatherization package completed by an agency such as Community Action could make you eligible for a \$200 bill credit.

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

- *HP= heat pump
- **EF= electric furnace