



# the South River EMC **Communicator**

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## what's inside

CEO Column	B
Ways To Pay	C
Director Receives Gold	D
Scholarship Opportunities	E
An Experience For All	F
TogetherWeSave	G-H



## Reap Positive Harvest Outcomes

It can be an exciting and exhausting time, the culmination of a season of hard work. However, dozens of farm workers are killed and hundreds are injured in accidents involving power lines and electrical equipment each harvest season.

Things you see every day can fade from view and in this busy season, it's easy to forget about power lines, which can be a deadly oversight.

- Begin by wearing the appropriate personal protective equipment, including hearing protection and a dust mask, if needed.

- Take time to review farm activities that take place around power lines.

- Be careful not to raise equipment such as ladders, poles, headers or baskets into power lines. Non-metallic materials like

lumber, tree limbs, ropes and hay can conduct electricity depending on dampness, dust and dirt contamination.

- Check the height of equipment to determine clearance; allow at least 10 feet above, below and to the side of power lines.

- Use a spotter when operating large machinery near power lines.

- If a vehicle comes in contact with a power line, stay on the equipment, warn others to stay away and call 911. Don't get off the equipment until the utility crew says it's safe to do so.

- If the power line is energized and you step out, touching the vehicle and ground, your body becomes the path and you'll be electrocuted. If a power line has fallen, the potential for the area nearby to be energized still exists.

*continued on page D*

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## Membership Advantage: \$6.8 Million Refunded



### MESSAGE FROM

CEO Chris M. Spears

**T**his month we recognize the contributions of cooperatives -- during National Cooperative Month.

Every October, cooperatives are recognized for the qualities that make the business model unique. Seven principles set us apart from other businesses: voluntary and open membership; democratic member control; member's economic participation; autonomy and independence; education, training and information; cooperation among cooperatives; and concern for community.

We uphold the seven cooperative principles daily. Each year, we hold an annual meeting where members of the Cooperative choose fellow members to serve on a governing board of directors – democratic member control. These directors serve to make decisions in the best interest of the members.

Another very important principle is member's economic participation. This is one of the advantages of being a member of a not-for-profit electric

cooperative! When our earnings are greater than our expenses and it is viable, we return money to you - our members.

This year, following a cost-of-service study, it became apparent that our cost-of-doing-business had been reduced, leaving us with a surplus. The board of directors chose to return money to the members as soon as possible. Therefore, members are receiving a bill credit monthly, which began in April and extends through December. By the end of the year, South River EMC will refund \$2.8 million in member advantage credits through electric bills.

The refunding of capital credits is one of the cornerstones of cooperatives. Any revenue exceeding the cost of doing business is allocated for return to the members based upon their electricity purchases for that year. South River EMC refunds 20-25 percent of the allocated amount the following year and then the remaining amount either when the member leaves the system or 19 years after it is earned.

In 2016, the Cooperative refunded \$3,672,912 to members in capital credits. This included 14,292 checks and 24,010 bill credits. This year's refund, which is projected to be nearly \$4 million will be returned to over 58,000 current and former members. This retirement will occur at the end of October or early November. Learn more by visiting [sremc.com/content/capital-credits](http://sremc.com/content/capital-credits).

Co-ops exist to serve their members, but they also play a major role in their local communities.

Cooperative membership is

unique. Electric cooperatives are committed to providing members with safe, reliable and affordable electricity, but there is more to it than that. We're local, and that means we care about our community. This is why we offer programs such as Bright Ideas, which has distributed over \$1 million to local classrooms and Operation Round Up, which has provided \$1.8 million in grants to local non-profit organizations, emergency services and schools.

South River EMC provides electric service to over 43,000 homes, farms and businesses; and North Carolina's 26 electric cooperatives serve more than 950,000 members across the state.

We are one of more than 900 electric cooperatives, public utility districts and public power districts serving 42 million people in 47 states.

Other co-op businesses thrive in our state, too, including Southern States, Allstate Insurance, numerous credit unions and several agricultural cooperatives.

In the 1930s, rural America needed electricity just as much as anyone else and it was a major challenge that investor-owned utilities weren't interested in tackling. Therefore, the men and women of rural America banded together and made it happen. And that's why we celebrate Cooperative Month – we celebrate the power of working together for the common good and bettering the quality of life for our friends and neighbors.

Being a MEMBER of an electric cooperative means we are always looking out for you!

## Options For An Easier Payment



**S**outh River EMC takes pride in giving you multiple ways to pay your bill each month.

### ONLINE

You can pay your bill online using our secure connection. Visit [sremc.com](http://sremc.com) and click online bill pay. You must be registered to pay online, so if you're not, sign-up today.

### BY PHONE

You can call our office at 910-892-8071 and pay by credit card or e-check using our automated system, 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week.

### DRAFT

You'll receive your bill each month with the amount and the date it will be deducted from your bank account or credit card. To sign up, call 910-892-8071 or

login to your account online, click draft payment options and set up your information.

### BUDGET BILLING

Budget billing allows you a more level payment option based on a rolling 13-month average of electric use. Your monthly bill will vary slightly, but helps you avoid the abrupt highs and lows caused by fluctuating weather patterns. To participate, your account must be current and you need to have had service with South River EMC for at least 12 months.

### IN PERSON

You can visit either office 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and pay by credit card, check, money order or cash. Our offices are located at 17494 US 421 South, Dunn; and 6491 Ramsey St., Fayetteville.

### PAY STATIONS

Location:

- Carroll's IGA, Hwy. 24, Stedman
- JE Womble & Sons, Forest Hills Shopping Center, Lillington

When using a pay station, you must have your current bill. Payments don't post until the next business day so don't use this option if you're disconnected or at risk of disconnection.

### MONEYGRAM EXPRESS

MoneyGram Express is a money transfer service, found at most Walmart and CVS stores. You must use our unique ID code of 9736. These payments are posted immediately, and cost around \$2 per payment.

If service has been disconnected, you'll need to pay the full amount, including fees, to have service restored. For MoneyGram Express locations visit [secure.moneygram.com/](http://secure.moneygram.com/).

### KIOSK

Located under the drive-thru canopy at each office, you can pay your bill using cash, e-check or credit card, 24-hours-a-day, seven days a week. You'll need to enter your account number, so have it handy. Ensure that you enter the correct account number so payments are applied accurately. The kiosk will walk you through payment, and does not give change. Any overpayment will show as a credit to the account. Payments go directly to your account and you can pay at any time, before work, after, on the weekend.

South River EMC is happy to offer you so many options for paying your bill each month.



## Director Receives Gold

**S**outh River EMC Director Francis Clifton received his Director Gold credential.

This credential recognizes directors who have earned their Credential Cooperative Director, or CCD, certificate and their Board Leadership Certificate, or BLC. It shows Clifton as being committed to advancing his knowledge throughout his tenure on the board.

A key strength of cooperatives is the commitment to education and

professional development.

The purpose of director level education is to help cooperative directors, at every stage of their service, understand their roles and responsibilities, stay up-to-date on key issues and trends in the industry and prepare them to meet the challenges facing electric cooperatives now and in the future.

Clifton represents members in the Cooperative's district three.

### *HARVEST Continued from page A*

Stay inside the vehicle unless there's fire or imminent risk of fire.

- If that's the case, jump off the equipment with your feet together, without touching the ground and vehicle at the same time. Keeping your feet together, hop away from the area.

- Never attempt to get back on or touch the equipment. Electrocutions have occurred after the operator dismounts and, thinking nothing has happened, tries to get back on the equipment.

- All workers should be informed of electrical hazards and trained in proper procedures to avoid injury.

- Operators should have a copy of the owner's manual on the machine, as well as emergency phone numbers.

- Never attempt to raise or move a power line to clear a path.

- Be careful on slopes, avoid sudden directional changes and park on flat ground when possible.

- Before starting or driving equipment like a cotton picker or combine, look for people or obstructions behind, alongside, or ahead. Maintain eye contact with others working around equipment.

- Take extra precaution when reversing equipment. Sound your horn repeatedly to alert anyone nearby. Make sure you keep reversing mirrors clean and well adjusted.

- Don't mount or dismount machinery while it's moving, and only one rider in the cab, unless

there's a second seat.

- Use your instruments, watch and listen for potential blockages. Avoiding blockages is easier than contending with them.

- Don't attempt to clear a blockage or climb and reach into the equipment unless you've shut it off, removed the key from the ignition, all moving parts have stopped and de-energized, and proper tag out procedures have been followed.

- Avoid operating large equipment within six feet of ditches, holes, depressions, and embankments.

- Take regular breaks when

operating equipment for long periods of time.

Following these tips will help improve the overall harvest experience. For more information on electric safety, visit

[safeelectricity.org](http://safeelectricity.org).





Are you currently in the **military** (or recently separated) and considering a job as an **electric lineman** when you separate? If so, we have a program for you!

# Boots To Buckets

South River EMC offers a scholarship to attend Nash Community College's Electric Line Academy. Visit [sremc.com](http://sremc.com) for details or call 910.230.2982.

Applications due November 17.

## Scholarship Opportunities From South River EMC

Students are back to work on assignments, enjoying events, and many are preparing college applications.

High school seniors are applying to colleges and parents are pondering questions such as: If they go there, will they live on or off campus? What kind of financial aid will they receive? Will they qualify for financial aid? Whatever the case, the search for scholarships will begin.

South River EMC's Power Source Volunteers, or PSV, will offer at least three college scholarships for the 2018 school year.

The PSV is a group of volunteers who work on behalf of the Cooperative as goodwill ambassadors to enhance the Cooperative's ongoing public relations efforts.

To be applicable, students must reside in a home that receives

electric service from South River EMC. Also, applicants must be high school seniors (December 2017 graduates are also eligible).

Applicants need to complete an application, including a photo, a signed and sealed transcript, a letter of recommendation, as well as a copy of their SAT or ACT score(s).

Applications are available in October and are due to the Cooperative by Friday, January 19, 2018. If mailing applications, they must be postmarked BEFORE January 19. Applications postmarked January 19 or later will not be accepted, inclement weather will not change the due date.

### OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

For members considering continuing education or students attending a community college, South River EMC offers a \$500

scholarship for those interested in attending Central Carolina, Johnston, Fayetteville, and Sampson community colleges.

These scholarships are available to incoming and continuing education students. Students must live in a home served by South River EMC. Funding will be used primarily for tuition expenses.

These scholarships are available at the community college each spring and will be for the 2018-2019 school year. See the information on [sremc.com/content/scholarships](http://sremc.com/content/scholarships).



## The Youth Tour Is An Experience For Everyone

South River EMC is offering three high school sophomores or juniors a unique opportunity, a week-long trip to Washington, D.C.

"Growing up I had been to D.C., but I never had the opportunity to do a week long trip," said Ty Meyer.

The Electric Cooperative Youth Tour, taking place June 9-15, 2018, is offered by the electric cooperatives of North Carolina, like South River EMC.

Each year, the Cooperative selects up to three students to attend a trip full of memory-making moments. In 2017, those students were Ty Meyer, Anna Blount and Kayla Matthews.

The Youth Tour offers a taste of Washington, D.C., where North Carolina students will join over 1,500 students from across the country. They'll visit monuments, museums, take a boat ride down

the Potomac, attend an all-states dance, participate in youth day, meet with members of Congress, as well as take in a game or show, schedule permitting.

"The Newsuem had the biggest impact on me," said Blount. "I want to be a news anchor, so I saw a lot of history and interesting facts about news."

The cost of the trip is covered by your sponsoring electric cooperative.

Students also learn about cooperatives by forming their own, the Soda Pop Co-op, which offers its members discounted drinks and snacks.

This is a great opportunity for students interested in history, politics, the arts, or science, business, or meeting new people.

"This trip sparked an interest in going to school to be a lobbyist," said Kayla Matthews.

Students gather on a Saturday, before leaving for Washington, D.C., where they experience a variety of activities before returning Friday afternoon.

Students return home with new friends, plans, independence, and excited to share these stories.

### A NEW OPPORTUNITY

South River EMC provides youth tourists who attend on behalf of the Cooperative a \$1,000 scholarship. Payment will be mailed directly to the school once the student has notified the Cooperative as to their school choice.

For more information on the Youth Tour, or the scholarship, visit [sremc.com](http://sremc.com) or call 910-892-8071.



# TOGETHERWESAVE.COM

## *If You're Thinking About Heating And Cooling*

When you bought your home, you probably considered a lot of features, but was one the heating and cooling system?

It should be, heating and cooling plays a large part in home comfort. If your heating and cooling system is not operating at optimal performance it can cost more to run and reduce overall comfort.

Heating and cooling systems contribute roughly 50 percent

of your electric costs each month.

One of those reasons is your system's efficiency, which includes a seasonal energy efficiency ratio, or SEER rating. The SEER rating measures the efficiency of the cooling part of an HVAC system.

The higher the SEER rating, the more efficiently it cools your home, meaning you don't need to worry about the

thermostat. It's more than just the SEER rating affecting your heating and cooling costs, but purchasing a high efficiency (17 SEER or greater) air source, dual fuel hybrid, split system or geothermal heat pump could make you eligible for a rebate, as well as saving energy and money.

For more information, visit [sremc.com](http://sremc.com) or call 910-892-8071 x2152.

## *But What Type Of Thermostat?*

It's time to install a thermostat that's easy to use, helps you save money and energy, and makes you happy you bought it. The smart thermostat.

First there was a standard thermostat that worked as a control panel for your heating and cooling system. Then came the programmable thermostat, which helped you save energy by programming it to adjust to

meet your schedule. However, a smart thermostat learns from your behaviors, allows you to control settings remotely, shows your energy use in real-time, and can even adjust settings based on conditions like humidity.

A smart thermostat can show you the time it takes to make temperature changes, so you can see the effectiveness of

your climate control system. Don't forget! You can also manage smart thermostats over Wi-Fi, from phone or tablet.

South River EMC offers a \$20 rebate on the installation of a smart thermostat, save energy, save money. For details visit [sremc.com](http://sremc.com) or call 910-892-8071 x 2152.

## *Insulation And Weatherization Issues?*

If you have a high efficiency heating and cooling system and you're not comfortable at home, don't adjust the thermostat.

Beside the cooling efficiency of your system, you also need to be aware of air infiltration and heat transfer. Air infiltration is the allowance of outdoor air inside and conditioned or heated air from inside, outside. Heat transfer prevents heat from coming into your home during the summer or leaving

your home during the winter.

Weather strip and caulk to prevent air infiltration. Heat transfer, based on the resistance, or R-Value, of insulation keeps heat where it belongs.

Does this affect you? If you're adjusting your thermostat, it does.

Insulation and weatherization improvements can help cut energy costs. Do an audit, check that insulation is thick and fully covering the attic, that doorways and windows are properly

weather stripped and not chewed up, and you've caulked around plumbing and wiring outlets.

Visit [sremc.com](http://sremc.com) to see areas that should be checked, and read about the rebates offered for insulation and weatherization improvements at your home. You can also call 910-892-8071 x 2222.



# TOGETHER WESAVE.COM

## Wonder Not About Appliances

Do you have an appliance that makes a racket and you wonder how soon you'll have to replace it? You don't want to dwell on it, but it's best to be prepared so you're ready when a replacement is needed.

Appliances have two costs, the cost to purchase and the cost to run, and while you

might get a great purchase cost, you have the cost to run the appliance for the life of it.

Be energy smart and consider Energy Star certified appliances, because they have lower run costs comparatively. If you purchase an Energy Star certified refrigerator, clothes washer, dryer or dehumidifier, you could

be eligible for a \$10 rebate from South River EMC. For more information, or an application, visit [sremc.com](http://sremc.com) or call 910-892-8071 x 2152.



## The HERO Home, Is It For You?

South River EMC offers several rebates to members and contractors for building high efficiency residential option, or HERO homes.

HERO homes are 30 percent more efficient than homes built to code. They require better insulation, fenestration, air sealing, equipment, and lighting

packages to achieve savings.

Certification can be achieved in one of two ways: the prescriptive path, which requires complying fully with a list of specific requirements; or the performance path, which requires an energy cost analysis proving the home will have energy costs less than or equal to

that same home built to the prescriptive requirements.

Does this energy saver sound like a home for you? If so, visit [sremc.com](http://sremc.com) to read about the rebate, as well as to find information on requirements. For more information call 910-892-8071 x 2153.

## Find The Water Heater That Can Save You Money

Choosing the perfect water heater is tough, especially on a time crunch. However that's usually when you think about water heaters, when your unit fails.

Sit and make a list about what you want in a water heater, size, type, even efficiency. Everyone has their lists of wants, and that includes water heaters. While many will just go to the store and pick out a newer standard electric water heater, remember that water heating is your second-highest energy cost.

There are more energy efficient options that meet your needs without breaking the bank. For example, a solar or

heat pump water heater.

Solar water heaters use the sun to warm your water and while they save on energy costs, they are slightly more expensive to install. You'll really see energy savings if your family uses a lot of water. These units typically require a back-up for days of limited sun availability.

A heat pump water heater, or HPWH, uses the surrounding warm air to heat your water. Because it uses energy to move heat, rather than create it, these units are two to three times more efficient. They must be situated in an area that remains in the 40 to 90 degree range year round, and have 1000 cu.

ft. around it. HPWHs cost more than a standard water heater, but less than a solar system.

Check everything out so that you're ready for when your water heater needs replacing.

South River EMC offers two rebates, a \$150 rebate on solar water heaters or a \$200 rebate on HPWHs. For complete information, visit [sremc.com](http://sremc.com) or call 910-892-8071 x 2152.