

# South River EMC Communicator

February 2023

## It Adds Up: Part Two Substations

*Last month we talked about the rising costs of transformers, as well as our ability to obtain them.*

Transformers are just part of another area where we are seeing inflation and delays, which the Cooperative is working to combat.

Substations are part of both transmission and distribution systems, like South River EMC.

They are connectors in the electrical system between long distances and short distances of electrical transmission.

When traveling a long distance, electricity is increased to a higher voltage to minimize energy losses along the way. It is decreased to be distributed to member homes.

"Substations are the heartbeat of our electrical system. They supply power to a large network of distribution power lines which carry power to vast areas of our system," said Chuck Richardson, Vice President of Operations and Engineering. "As demand for electric power grows, it is necessary to strategically place new substations within the network so that we can maintain a reliable and resilient system."

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# All things being Equal.



You might have noticed a line item on your bill. **The Equalizer** allows South River EMC to collect extra revenue whenever the cost of electricity increases.

Likewise, **The Equalizer** enables us to issue a credit to you when less revenue is needed.

This leveling of costs is designed to reduce the impact on you rather than a rate adjustment.



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## **SUBSTATIONS** *continued from page A*

Substations include transformers, breakers, regulators, reclosers and relaying protection packages, each of which include a cost and a turnaround time.

Transformers, as previously stated, step-down electric voltage for safer electric use. They are taking anywhere from five to 12 months from order to delivery.

Breakers are used to open and close medium- and high-voltage electric distribution circuits. They can be operated manually, when necessary, to perform maintenance or will automatically trip if an electrical fault/short-circuit occurs. Breakers take about 48-60 weeks, or four to six months, and are special order.

Regulators are pieces of equipment that, as the name says, regulate voltage at a substation to ensure consistent and adequate

voltage levels are maintained across the electric system. These devices have increased in pricing from 50-300 percent. Small regulators are seeing cost increases of \$14,925. A larger regulator has risen in cost as much as \$27,100. Regulators are used in groups of three in substations, so under current rates, a gang of three regulators, will cost between \$111,000 and \$138,000, over 50 percent of what it was previously.

### **“Substations are the heartbeat of our electrical system.”**

Reclosers, like breakers, operate when an electrical fault/short-circuit occurs on the electric system. They are often placed on circuits downline of substations to isolate faulted areas and minimize the number of members affected. For explanation, electricity is a straight line; now, when a fault occurs, like a short,

or a tree falling on the line, the recloser opens, preventing the path of electricity. Reclosers are 48-60 months out, and averaging around \$36,000 per unit, an increase of around 45 percent since 2020.

Lastly, we have a relay protection package, which is a cabinet pre-wired with all the apparatus, including relay controls, necessary to provide over current protection, which is when the current exceeds the rated capacity of a circuit or of the connected equipment. They were \$18,000, and now, two years later are approximately \$26,500.

"We are not delaying the building of new or upgrades of existing stations," said Richardson. "But we are having to begin the design of them six to nine months earlier than normal."

Planning ahead, just another part of looking out for members.

# Your 2023 Annual Meeting



*South River EMC is gearing up for the 2023 Annual Meeting of Members.*

We will continue the digital/call-in format, with the meeting planned for Thursday, April 27, so mark your calendars.

Attendees will once again be eligible to receive a \$10 bill credit, as well as being entered to win a door prize bill credit.

Keep an eye on this newsletter for more information regarding the 2023 Annual Meeting of Members.

What better way to join the Annual Meeting than from your own home?

## Nominations Made By Committee

*The committee on nominations announced the submission of incumbent directors at a meeting of the board of directors on Jan. 3:*

**District 1: Kelly Harrington**

**District 2: Sue Flowers**

**District At-Large:**

**George Williams**

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

*The ways in which directors may be elected:*

**1.** By petition. Any 100 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.

\*During each director election, when the number of nominees



**L to R:** Walter Clark, Anthony (Tony) Warren, Glenda Taylor, Johnnie Baggett, Warren Paul Jones, Robert Earl Butler Jr. and Raylon Wood

**Not pictured:** Carol Hudson and Joseph Anders

is the same as the number of directors to be elected from a particular district, the nominee will be declared elected automatically and no balloting will be required.

### **2023 Nominating Committee Members:**

District 1 - Glenda Taylor

District 2 - Raylon Wood

District 3 - Joseph Anders

District 4 - Johnnie Baggett

District 5- Anthony "Tony" Warren

District 6 - Carol Hudson

District 7 - Warren Paul Jones

District 8 - Walter Clark

At Large - Robert Earl Butler Jr.

## Reminder:

If you are already signed up for an online account, you don't even need to set up new login credentials -- just download the app and start using it.

## Easier than ever to manage your account.



Just search for and download **South River EMC** from your Apple or Google App Store.

The APP lets you access account info, pay your bills, report an outage, and much more!



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## Unique Opportunity For Middle Schoolers

*This summer, current fifth and sixth graders can attend the Touchstone Energy Basketball camps offered at NC State and UNC-Chapel Hill, courtesy of South River EMC.*

The camp opportunity gives boys and girls a unique experience to attend basketball camp on one of two of the state's largest college campuses.

Students statewide are encouraged to apply for one of 50

all-expenses-paid scholarships to attend the Carolina Basketball Camp at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (June 17-21) and the Wolfpack Women's Basketball Academy at North Carolina State University in Raleigh (June 18-22).

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.

### Camps must:

- ▶ Be a rising sixth or seventh grader. This means the student should currently be in fifth or sixth grade.
- ▶ Attend a school in the Cooperative service area.
- ▶ Have permission from a parent or guardian to attend.
- ▶ Provide their own transportation to and from camp.

Winners will attend camps courtesy of South River EMC. The Cooperative funds one scholar-

ship to each camp.

Applications are scored on academics, extracurricular activities and an essay that must accompany the application.

The application period ends March 31.

Eligible students interested in the scholarship can visit [sremc.com/basketball-camps](http://sremc.com/basketball-camps), or [ncelectriccooperatives.com/sports-camps](http://ncelectriccooperatives.com/sports-camps) to complete an application. Applications must be completed online.



Coach Wes Moore and Alyssa Stephens



Miles Ray and Coach Hubert Davis

# It's Time To Give Us Your A's

*Last call for the February "Give Us An A" drawing.*

This program recognizes students who achieve at least one A on their most recent report card. That means if your child's recent report card has one A or five, they are eligible to participate.

Simply make a copy of the report card and send it to:

**South River EMC  
"Give Us An A"**

**PO Box 931**

**Dunn, NC 28335**

**Or email it to:** [connections@sremc.com](mailto:connections@sremc.com).

You must include the member's name, address, South River EMC account number and daytime telephone number. Report cards will not be accepted without this information.

The Cooperative will draw 15 names to each receive a \$25 gift card.

The program is open to students who are members, or children of members, of South River EMC.

Don't miss an opportunity to celebrate good grades. Report cards should be submitted by close of business Feb. 6.



# Programs To Benefit You

*South River EMC is looking out for you in a number of ways.*

We offer **Outage Texting**. Text **#out** to 000530 or 888.338.5530 to report an outage. You can also text **#status** to get an update, as well as receiving a text when power has been restored, less time on the phone overall.

You can take control of your energy use using **SmartView**. The usage monitoring program updates daily to show your energy use and daily temperature highs and lows.

Members enrolled in SmartView, often become more aware of energy use patterns.

We offer **Smart Alerts**, for those who like reminders and notifications. You can

select which alerts you receive, including: 2-day due date reminder; cutoff notification; payment receipt; special messages; severe weather alerts; and usage updates. Alerts are available via phone or email.

The **South River EMC app**, a new addition, is an even easier way to access your account and pay your bill, and it can be downloaded from the Apple or Google store.

The **SmartEnergy Profile** helps you see how energy is used in your home, based on size, appliances and temperatures and can help you see how an Energy Star refrigerator could affect your bill.

Our **Advise Guys** are on hand to answer questions about solar information, as well as rebates and efficiency concerns.

Members can participate in **Connect to Save**, a program where your thermostat is adjusted minimally during times of high electric use. It's a savings for everyone.

**Watt Watchers** is a time-of-use program where you use less electricity during the busiest energy use times to help lessen the electric load.

If you'd like to learn more about any of these programs, we encourage you to visit [sremc.com](http://sremc.com) or call 910.892.8071.





## HERO Homes: The Efficient Option

*The high efficiency residential option, or HERO, home is a possibility to consider if building a home.*

Homes cost, to build, to run and to upkeep. However, a HERO certified home can help you save with a tighter home envelope.

In fact, a HERO certified home is 30 percent more efficient than a home built to code due to insulation

upgrades, high-efficiency lighting, window U-factors, whole house tightness and duct leakage testing, among other things.

Details on what is required to build a HERO home can be found at [energycodes.gov](https://energycodes.gov). South River EMC also offers rebates on new HERO certified homes, for details, visit [sremc.com/hero-program](https://sremc.com/hero-program) or call 910.892.8071 x 2153.

## Water Heater Considerations

*There are several factors to consider when choosing a water heater, fuel type, tank size and to tank or not to tank, to name a few. This depends on the amount of people in the household and the amount of water used at peak times.*

Typically, you have a standard electric water heater, which continuously heats water, but there are options out there that can heat your water more efficiently, using less energy.

The solar and heat pump water heaters are two such units. You may consider the solar water heater since its fuel is free. Typically located on the roof, the system uses the sun to heat your water, with recom-

mendation to have an electric back-up for days of limited sun and high use.

Another option, the heat pump water heater, uses heat from the surrounding area. Heat pump water heaters should be located in areas that remain in the 40-90-degree range, and require about 1,000 cu. ft. Because they move heat rather than make it, a heat pump water heater is 2-3 times more efficient than a standard water heater.

There are of course, other options, but these two are eligible for rebates from South River EMC.

But you must first decide what option is best for your home and for you. For details on the rebates visit [sremc.com/energy-efficient-water-heating](https://sremc.com/energy-efficient-water-heating) or call 910.892.8071 x 2153.

## Energy Star: A Positive Purchase

*Energy Star appliances, two positives in one purchase.*

South River EMC offers rebates on Energy Star certified refrigerators, dehumidifiers, clothes washers, and dryers.

Energy Star certified appliances undergo rigorous testing to provide you with appliances that are not only attractive, but energy efficient as well.

For details visit [sremc.com/energy-star-appliances](https://sremc.com/energy-star-appliances) or call 910.892.8071 x 2153.

## Lifetime Consideration of Heating And Cooling

*Your heating and cooling system has been running and there's still plenty of cool weather left.*

Heating and cooling units have a lifespan of around 10 years. Of course, that is a general timeline, some will last longer, others not. Regardless, the older your unit, the less efficient it becomes over time.

The efficiency of a heating and cooling system is based on the seasonal energy efficiency ratio, or

SEER, rating, which measures the cooling efficiency of a system. The higher the SEER rating, the more efficient the unit and the less cost associated with running it, if you use it efficiently.

South River EMC offers rebates on high efficiency units if you are in the market for a new one. Visit [sremc.com/energy-star-heating-cooling](https://sremc.com/energy-star-heating-cooling) for details or call 910.892.8071 x 2222.

## Make Your Home An Oasis

*Is your home an oasis where you find safety and comfort?*

If you're experiencing any kind of discomfort, such as cold spots, or drafts, home improvement might help.

As to the type of improvement, it could be weatherization or insulation work. For example, drafts can be prevented by weatherizing your home, weather stripping moving pieces and caulking around non-moving parts.

If there are cool spots, that could be insufficient or lack of insulation. Attics are typically where we see the loss of heated air to the outside, whether because insulation is inefficient or bare.

Making improvements can help you save and improve comfort as well. Find out about rebates offered by South River EMC at [sremc.com/insulation-weatherization](https://sremc.com/insulation-weatherization), or by calling 910.892.8071 x 2222.



Message from Advise Guy Aaron Jackson



## Why Does My Electric Bill Increase During Winter?

There's really nothing like North Carolina weather. As I write this, the high temperature for the day is forecast to be 67 degrees, when just six days ago the high registered at Fayetteville Regional Airport was only 29! If you've lived in this area for any length of time, you're used to temperature fluctuation. You may also be used to seeing your electric bill fluctuate this time of year, increasing over the previous month. You may have wondered why that happens so I want to address the likely cause of this yearly increase and provide tips to mitigate it.

### Your Electricity Consumption is Weather Dependent

The largest energy user in the average home is the Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) System. If your home is all electric, the HVAC system and your water heater account for 50 percent or more of your bill monthly. During the extreme temperature periods of the winter (i.e. December-February) the HVAC system and water heater work overtime to produce heat for your home and water. Why are these systems so expensive to operate? Because their primary objective is to create heat, and when you are doing that with electricity it takes a significant amount to accomplish the task.

### Resistive Heating

If you have an electric furnace and/or an electric water heater, then your primary heating sources use the process of resistive heating. Resistive heating occurs when electricity passes through a conductive material (i.e. a heating element) and heat is produced and released as a result. When temperatures dip and

we begin to use our heating systems, our electricity consumption increases noticeably because these systems require large amounts of electricity to produce the heat we need. If you have a heat pump, your system consumes less electricity the majority of the winter. That is because those types of systems only employ resistive heating when the temperature outdoors falls below 35 degrees. Still, whether you have an electric furnace or a heat pump, you see an increase this time of year that gets your attention.

### Solutions for Savings

The two appliances/systems we've been discussing have two things in common: both produce heat and both are controlled by thermostats. Therefore, the best way to lessen the impact these systems have on your bill is to maintain reasonable thermostat settings.

For water heaters, the recommended setting for both the top and bottom element is 120 degrees. For all electric HVAC system types, the recommended setting for the heat is 68 degrees. If you have a heat pump, it's best to set the thermostat and leave it, as fluctuation could cause the unit to activate the resistive heat strips. But, if you have an electric furnace, don't be afraid to drop the thermostat setting a couple of degrees when you leave for work in the morning, then return it to normal when you get home. Air sealing and insulation upgrades are also very beneficial.

These improvements help hold the heat your system is producing inside longer. Lastly, consider installing an insulation blanket over your water heater. If we can help you cut costs this winter, reach out to us at [adviseguys@sremc.com](mailto:adviseguys@sremc.com).



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