

South River EMC Communicator

September 2023

Smart, Healthy, Strong, Bold And Proud!

The vision of Simply Girls Inc. is to inspire all girls to be the best version of themselves, and they received an Operation Round Up grant to make that happen.

"Founder Kimberly Breeden wanted a program that truly addresses the needs of young girls in Harnett County," said Executive Director Tanya Roper.

Working in partnership with schools and business leaders, the organization focuses on the development of the whole girl, to value herself, take risks and develop her inherent strengths.

Simply Girls offers different kinds of programming that includes educational, STEAM, Girls on the Move, financial literacy, cooking and cultural enrichment.

This is all done with a staff of three and about 20 volunteers.

The organization applied for an Operation Round Up grant for its girls reading enhancement activity time, or G.R.E.A.T program.

"We learned about Operation Round Up from the PAL organization," said Roper.

G.R.E.A.T is designed to reach students who struggle early with reading, providing them with an individualized reading assistance plan to meet their needs.

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Students participating in a function at Simply Girls.



Reminder:

South River EMC offices will be closed Monday, September 4, in observance of Labor Day.

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The grant was used to purchase books, new tables and chairs, as well as a bookshelf for the organization's education room.

"Girls were struggling with reading and grades were reflecting it along with end-of-grade testing," she said. "Our goal is to improve their reading skills so that they can be successful at school and life."

The program is staff created, using educational reading programs and software to address the gaps in reading with girls. Parents and teachers help to identify needs so that Simply Girls can build a program to meet the students' needs.

"Referrals come from Harnett County Schools,



Girls participating in the G.R.E.A.T. program.

social services and word-of-mouth," said Roper. "The G.R.E.A.T. program works with elementary and middle school age girls."

Each girl has a notebook they use to track their individual progress and goals.

"The program has been in place almost three years," she said. "Girls are improving in reading and are finding a love for it, their comprehension is also improving."

Simply Girls works with girls from ages 5-18 and is located in Dunn. If you would like more information, you can visit them online at simplygirls.org.

Power On Scholarship Recipient Selected

South River EMC has selected Patrick Wood as the recipient of the 2023 Power On Scholarship.



Wood, a resident of Four Oaks, was selected to receive a scholarship to attend the 16-week Electric Line Construction Technology Academy at Nash Community College.

"In a growing industry such as line work, we are honored to help encourage people to consider line work as a career and to offer this scholarship to help them meet their goal," said VP of Member Services & PR Catherine O'Dell.

Applicants were reviewed and points assigned based on how closely the applicant met requirements. Points were given for the following areas: completed application, education, narrative and interview.

The scholarship is offered by South River EMC and covers the cost of tuition, books, boots and safety glasses. The purpose is to provide interested individuals with the ability to gain the experience and training necessary for a successful career as an electric line worker.

Upon successful completion of the program, individuals receive the Associate of Applied Science degree and will possess the necessary skills for employment in the dynamic electric utility field.

As the recipient, Wood will begin the Electric Line Construction Technology Academy August 14.

Information on the Power On Scholarship can be found at sremc.com/power.

CELEBRATE THEIR SERVICE.

Salute our defenders this Veteran's Day.

From November 3–12, sponsored American Flags will be flown at each of our two Fields of Honor, located at our South River EMC offices. You can sponsor a flag or flags in the names of current, former, or deceased members of the military with a minimum \$25 donation each.

Every 3-foot x 5-foot flag will carry a tag bearing the name of one honored vet. All proceeds will go to local veterans' organizations.

Deadline to sponsor a flag is October 25.

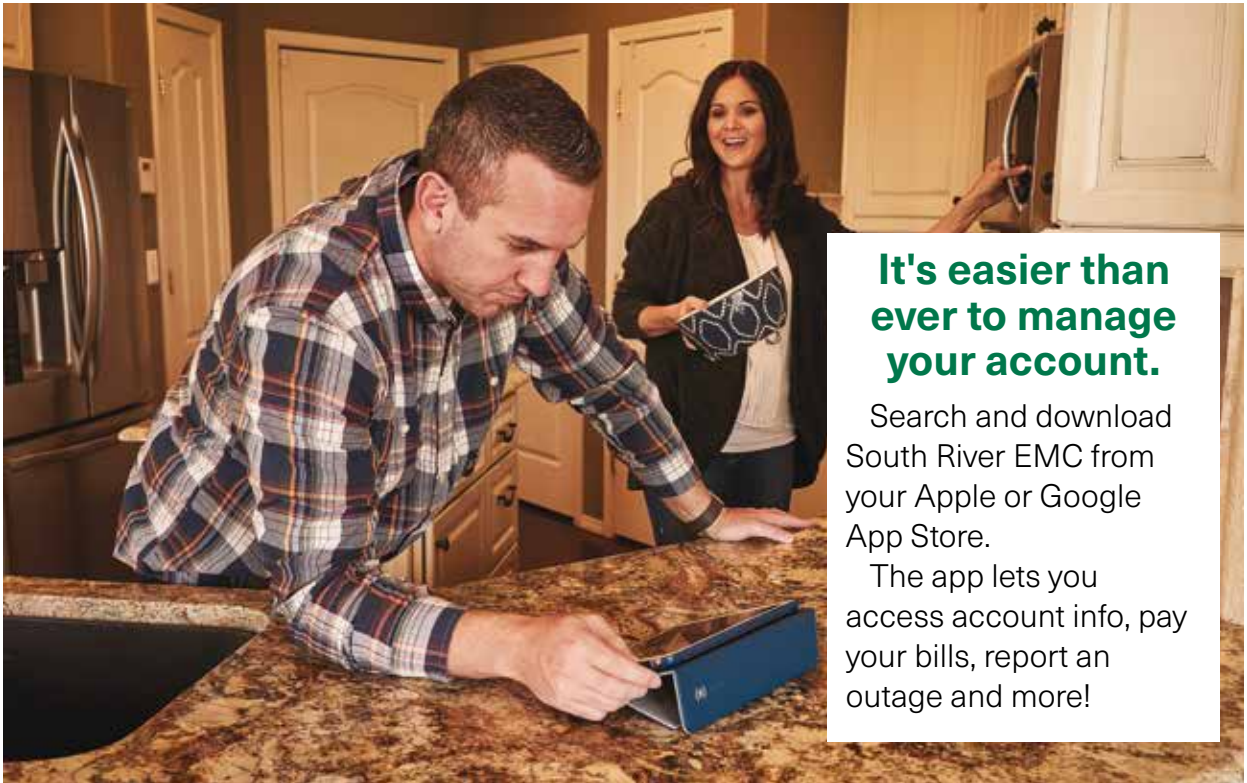


South River Electric
Membership Corporation

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To sponsor one or more Fields of Honor flags,
visit sremcfields.com or call **910.892.8071**.



It's easier than ever to manage your account.

Search 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 more!

Electricity: Still A Good Value

In recent years, we have all seen a spike in costs.

Unfortunately, South River EMC is no different, we too have seen an increase in the cost of doing business.

As you might have read about, we have put the Equalizer in place, which is a temporary measure used to recover unexpected increases incurred by the Cooperative.

Compared to some other commonly tracked costs, electricity has risen the least.

In the past five years, electricity rates have risen 4.6 percent, a considerable amount less than the 6.1 percent you were seeing for gasoline, it is even more now.

Bread is 5.5 percent more and think how fast your

family can eat it. But you washed clothes, dishes and yourself with water heated by electricity.

Helpful Tools

SmartView: Visit your online account and enroll in SmartView. This enables you to view your

daily energy use with the high/low temperatures for each day. It helps you to see how weather impacts your energy use. Consider enrolling in daily energy alerts.

Make a list of what you do in a day, and if you are signed up for an online South River EMC account, check SmartView that day.

Each day, it will update with the amount of kilowatt hours you have used.

SmartEnergy Profile:

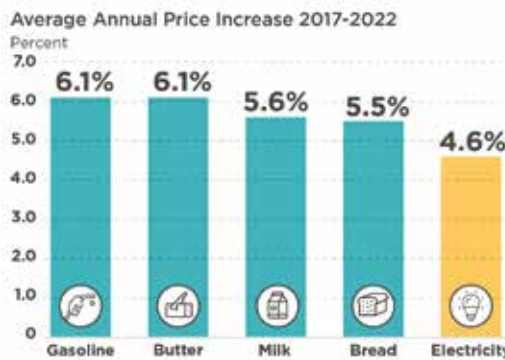
Complete your SmartEnergy Profile for a detailed monthly energy-use report.

When you think of all the activities you perform with electricity, from work, to food, laundry to entertainment and comfort, you can get a lot of bang for your buck.

For more energy savings tools and tips, visit sremc.com.

ELECTRICITY REMAINS A GOOD VALUE

Although inflation has led to increasing costs in many areas of our lives, the cost of powering your home rises slowly when compared to other common goods. Looking at price increases over the last five years, electricity remains a good value.



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index

You Gave Us The A's!

Congrats to students who received A's on their report cards!

South River EMC would like to take this opportunity to recognize 15 of those students who were drawn to win a \$25 gift card.

Georganna Strickland
Mintz Christian Academy

Declan McGarry
Mac Williams Middle

Ashley Davis
Cape Fear High

Lance Williams
Midway High

Ethan Spillman
Northwood Temple Academy Middle

Katelyn Evans
Riverside Christian Academy

Mahalia Thomas
South Harnett Elementary

Rebecca Bell
Coats Erwin Middle

James Belprez
Northwood Temple Academy

Apollo Gladden
St. Ann Catholic School

Aria McKnight
Eastover-Central Elementary

Skylar Bullard
Mac Williams Middle

Kent Evans
Riverside Christian Academy

Keegan McGarry
Mac Williams Middle

Anna Spillman
Northwood Temple Academy Middle

The "Give Us An A" program occurs twice a year and we collect recent report cards with at least one A. Then 15 of those students are randomly selected to receive a \$25 gift card.

The next drawing will take place in February 2024.

Learn About Outage Texting

As a member of South River EMC, you are signed up for outage texting.

What that means is that if your power should go out, you can grab your cell phone and text #out to 888.338.5530 or 000530. You should receive a response, confirming the outage address.

If you only have one account with the Cooperative, the "a" option should be your service address. If you have multiple accounts, you will receive several options. Select the option you wish to report. Only one account can be reported at a time.

Now, if you want to know the status of the outage,

you can text #status. If there is any update, it will be texted back to you.

At some point you might receive a text saying your power has been restored, but you check, and it has not. What might have happened is that the original reason for the outage, such as a blown fuse, might have been fixed, but upon that repair another issue occurred resulting in a continued outage.



When reporting your outage via text, please understand you need only to text #out and answer the question texted back. ***Please do not text your service address to the number, it will not be recognized by the reporting system.***

If you prefer to not participate in outage texting, you can text STOP. This will unsubscribe your phone number from texting. In order to resubscribe, you will need to text

UNSTOP to 888.338.5530.

Once you receive a message from your cellular provider that texting is restored, you will text SREMCTEXT to 888.338.5530 to re-enroll.

If you have questions about outage texting, please contact us at 910.892.8071.



Don't Let Drafty Windows Impact Comfort

Replacing windows can be an expensive and daunting task, but you wouldn't discount the thought if it could help costs and comfort.

While windows limit heat gain and loss to keep you comfortable and your home more efficient,

they also provide you a view of the outside.

But windows age, as does everything else, and over time can become drafty, which wastes energy, some 25-30 percent, and leaves you uncomfortable.

So if you feel replacement is

necessary, research installers and remember, newly replaced windows could be eligible for rebate from South River EMC.

For details on the window rebate, visit sremc.com/energy-star-windows.

Water Heating Choices Add Up

Water heating is the second highest contributor to your electric bill each month, and there are choices you can make to lessen the financial impact.

When a new water heater is needed, consider something than the conventional electric storage water heater. The unit continuously uses electricity to heat water so it is ready when needed. This adds up. Perhaps a heat pump water heater would be better for your home, or maybe a solar water heater?

Heat pump water heaters are 2-3 times more efficient than a

standard electric water heater, moving heat rather than making it, to heat water. These units require a 1,000 cu. ft. of space and should be located in an area which remains in the 40- to 90-degree range.

Meanwhile, solar water heaters use a free resource, the sun, to heat your water. The systems are not as expensive as they once were, but they can still cost, and making sure that you have a good solar resource to recoup the cost is key. Ask contractors, get information on sizing, solar resource, cost, location and then, compare.

Don't be afraid to ask questions and do research yourself either. Also, remember that an electric back up is recommended for solar water heating, to assist on bad weather days, or days of high-water use.

South River EMC offers rebates on solar and heat pump water heating, so if you decide one of these options is a good fit for your home, check out rebate information at sremc.com/energy-efficient-water-heating.

Pool Savings Potential

If time is coming to close your pool, you might not be thinking about ways to save. However, it's the perfect time to look for deals on helpful energy-saving products.

For example, your pool pump. If you have a single speed pump, it uses a large amount of energy and water for projects. And you're paying for it.

Consider purchasing and installing a variable or two-speed pump. With a unit like one of these, you can tailor your energy and water use to the task at hand. Meaning you could spend less cleaning and filtering your pool every week.

Consider running your pool pump less. Run it an hour less each day, and as long as the

water stays clear, that's how long you can run the pump. Cutting down on run time cuts down on energy use, which adds to savings.

For details on the rebate you can receive for a variable or two-speed pool pump, visit sremc.com/pool-pumps.

Replacing Your HVAC System When Repairs Mount

It's time to service your heat pump to get it ready for cooler weather.

If your heating and cooling unit is 10 years old or older, you'll want to make sure it is still operating at full efficiency. The older a unit gets, the more inefficient it becomes. And as repair costs increase, a new unit might be the best and most comfortable option.

South River EMC offers rebates on higher efficiency units, that

is 16 SEER2 or above. SEER2 stands for seasonal energy efficiency ratio 2, or the cooling efficiency of a system. The higher the SEER2 rating, the more efficient a unit is at cooling.

However, to be the most efficient, units must be properly sized for the home. Too small and the unit runs constantly, too big and the unit cycles on and off frequently. Neither option is good for your unit, home, or comfort.

When considering heating and

cooling, think what would work well in your home. Would an air source heat pump work? Do you have central air conditioning? If you're building a home, consider a geothermal system, they are the most efficient heat pumps.

So, when purchasing a new unit, make sure you make efficiency a part of the selection process.

For information on rebates offered by South River EMC, visit sremc.com/energy-star-heating-cooling.



Weatherizing Improves Comfort

Heating and cooling your home can get expensive, particularly with the highs and lows of temperatures. Having your home properly insulated and weather stripped improves not just comfort but cost as well.

But maybe you can't afford to make those improvements, or you don't have the ability to do so, there may be a way if you are eligible for community action.

With approximately 50 percent

of your electric bill attributed to heating and cooling your home, leaks and insufficient insulation will have an impact.

Having necessary work completed by a Community Action program, you could be eligible for a rebate from South River EMC. In order to qualify for the rebate, the entire package must be completed.

What does the weatherization package for single family or manufactured low-income

homes include? Air/duct sealing, improved insulation, an HVAC tune-up or replacement, and a programmable thermostat in a home with a heat pump or an electric furnace/ central AC.

Once work is completed you can apply for the rebate offered by South River EMC, for details on the program, as well as the rebate, please visit sremc.com/weatherization.

HERO Home

The high efficiency residential option, or HERO, home is an option to consider when building a home.

A HERO home is built more efficiently from the ground up with a much tighter thermal enclosure. There are two ways to receive certification:

The prescriptive path is straightforward but inflexible. That means full compliance with a list of specific requirements for things like insulation, high-efficiency lighting, window U-factors, whole house tightness and duct leakage testing, among other things.

The performance path is more flexible. It requires an energy cost

analysis (provided to you by your HERS Rater and signed-off by a design professional) as proof that the home you are building will have energy costs less than or equal to that same home built to the HERO code's prescriptive requirements. This does NOT allow for higher efficiency equipment, because the HERO Code is focused almost solely on improvements in the thermal enclosure.

Interested in learning more about HERO home code? You can read about it at energycodes.gov.

South River EMC offers a rebate to members who build or purchase a newly built HERO home.

Contractors who build a new HERO certified home that receives electricity from South River EMC will be eligible to receive a \$400 rebate.

Members who move into a new HERO certified home are eligible to receive a \$200 rebate.

For members who have a HERO home custom built, you will be eligible to receive a \$600 rebate.

Homes must be checked for compliance with all appropriate paperwork submitted before rebate is issued.

For details visit sremc.com/hero-program.



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Communicator

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