

# South River EMC Communicator

October 2023

## Funding For Food

*You can see the excitement in someone who is meant to serve, and you can see it in their work.*

This type of excitement is evident at the Dunn United Ministerial Association, or DUMA, managed by executive director, Todd Snyder, which recently received an Operation Round Up grant.

"DUMA started about 30 or so years ago," said Snyder. "A group of local pastors would meet monthly and pray and they would talk about people that would come to them for help."

Noticing a lot of similarities between congregations, they started DUMA, which is now comprised of 28 churches and over 260 volunteers.

"We didn't decide what services to offer," he said. "Rather, God did."

The main program is the food pantry, which helps with back pack buddy programs, food for home-bound individuals and more, but the organization also offers financial assistance, financial counseling and is looking to do even more.

"Oscar Harris [former Dunn businessman and mayor] gave the property [323 East Broad Street, Dunn] to the organization to begin this program, and explained a 10-year plan," said Snyder.

Snyder laid out how people came through the pantry program. When someone first visits the pantry they must complete paperwork regarding number of family members and overall need.

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## Reminder:

Be careful on the road, it's the season of trick-or-treating!



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Once it is determined how many people live in a home, a client is assigned a letter which will ensure they receive the proper amount of food and toiletries for their household.

So, on the next visit, clients just check in and move through the pantry.

When finished, clients exit out the back door, where volunteers help to load their car.

"We are open to the public two days a month, on the second and fourth Tuesdays for food distribution," said Snyder.

The days before a distribution, coolers are stocked, boxes are separated and filled, and bags are packed. However, the Wednesday following one, leaves the organization bare.

The Operation Round Up grant they received was to purchase food that they cannot otherwise get from the Food Bank of Central and Eastern North Carolina, or food drives. This would include being able to make purchases from local retail stores to directly facilitate community need.

"This grant was awesome to

receive because we can't do what we do without people and organizations who support us," said Snyder. "We are very appreciative and are even more responsible in how the money is spent."

Because not only does DUMA run the local pantry, but it also serves up to 37 homebound seniors each week with hot meals and food boxes each Thursday.

Every Friday, they take about 147 food bags to five schools to distribute to children who are food insecure.

Once a year, they send food to the Baptist Children's home, and partner with First Baptist Church of Dunn to pack 140 food boxes for Meals On Wheels recipients when services stop during the holidays.

DUMA partners with numerous churches to help with their programs, be it backpack buddies or homebound members' food provisions.

"We have people volunteering from all kinds of faith backgrounds," said Snyder. "And they've met some of their best friends volunteering and working here."

DUMA is at work to add a permanent health clinic, which



would be open weekly for free health services.

They were offering a free health and vaccine clinic with Campbell University students of medicine and it worked out very well.

"There is very seldom we haven't been able to meet a need," he said. "This is one of those needs."

DUMA is also at work to open a pay-what-you-can restaurant. This format does not charge a certain price for a meal, but rather you pay what you can or want. This will help those who truly need it as well, since tokens will be available for those who don't have the money to cover a meal.

"We have seen a huge increase in financial assistance and more use of the food pantry," said Snyder. "There has been an increase in need of services with the changes in the economy."

The organization fund raises as well, the list of upcoming events can be found on their web site, [dunnunited.org](http://dunnunited.org).

Interested in donating, or volunteering? Call 910.891.1633 to learn about needs and opportunities.



# Fuel Make Up For Reliable Service

*Electricity and the fuels used to generate it have become a hot topic.*

South River EMC, as well as electric cooperatives across the state, are continuously working toward a more sustainable future.

The graphic at right shows the power diversity of the cooperatives of North Carolina, including South River EMC.

The largest portion of our electricity comes from emission-free nuclear generation. This type of generation is reliable, safe and affordable.

In fact, 25 of North Carolina's electric cooperatives have an over 60 percent ownership in Catawba nuclear station unit one.

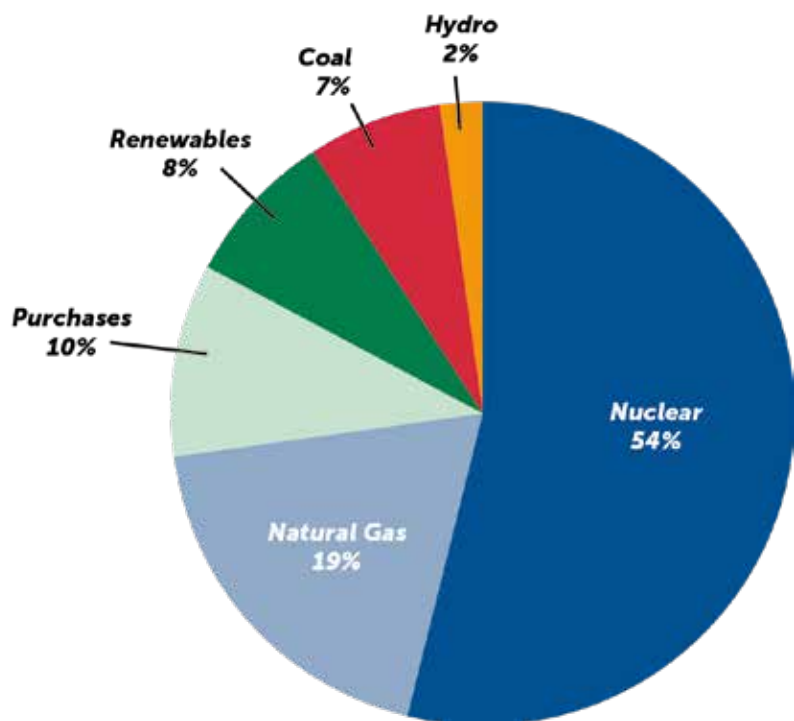
Natural gas generation is next because of its availability to be dispatched quickly when needed. We have a roughly 13 percent share of a 750-megawatt combined-cycle natural gas plant, as well as ownership and operation of two natural gas peak generating plants that provide a combined capacity of 690 megawatts.

Next is the purchased part of our portfolio, which is power we purchase through wholesale energy suppliers.

Roughly eight percent of our fuel mix is currently from renewable energy, along with an additional two percent from hydro power.

Coal is at only seven percent. The goal is to go net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, and we are well on the way to that.

Our goal is to provide affordable and reliable electricity to members. We do so with this diversified fuel mix and will continue to explore alternate options,



as well as working on options for battery storage.

In addition to our clean-fuel mix, South River EMC has joined with 24 of North Carolina's electric cooperatives in announcing expanded efforts to build a brighter future for our members and communities across the state.

Recognizing and supporting the priorities of our members, we are launching new efforts to preserve the reliability and affordability of electricity while also achieving important sustainability goals. Specifically, South River EMC and the state's other electric cooperatives are working together to reach net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 with an interim goal of reducing carbon emissions by 50 percent from 2005 levels by 2030. By coordinating new and existing resources and implementing innovative services for our members, we are creat-

ing a modern electric grid that is more flexible, resilient and capable of supporting new energy solutions and the growing needs of local communities.

Beyond providing reliable, affordable and sustainable power, our commitment to building a brighter future extends to enriching local communities through economic development, education initiatives and community support that will help bridge our state's urban/rural divide. A few examples of this include our work with the agricultural microgrid at Butler Farms, along with our efforts in programs, which help manage demand for power and keep costs down for everyone, and the Advise Guys, a dedicated team that provides South River EMC members input and advice regarding energy-saving measures.

# New Cooperative Board Member Announced

*South River EMC welcomes new District 8 director.*

Kayla Bartley from Gray's Creek has been appointed to the South River Electric Membership Corporation's Board of Directors to represent the members in the cooperative's District 8.

Bartley is a lifelong resident of the Gray's Creek Community in Cumberland County. She attended Campbell University where she obtained an undergraduate degree and a Master of Business Administration in 2013. She returned to Gray's Creek to work for the family businesses, Hoke County Sand Company and Riddle Farms.

Bartley is actively involved in the Gray's Creek High School FFA Alumni and the Ladies Auxiliary

at Gray's Creek Fire Department Station 18. "These relationships mean a great deal to me," Bartley said. "I love the sense of community it brings to know and love those around me."

Bartley was appointed by the board of directors to complete the unexpired term of Clifton McNeill Jr. who resigned from the South River EMC Board of Directors in February.

"Ms. Bartley is highly recommended for her education, agribusiness background and passion for the community," said South River EMC Board Chair Dr. Elena Sue Godwin-Baker. "She brings a new perspective to the Board and will be an asset to the members and the Cooperative for many years to come."



Bartley lives in the Gray's Creek community with her husband, James Bartley III and their three children: Vera, Emmett, and Elliott.

## Offering You Payment Options

- Online
- South River EMC app
- Electronic draft
- E-checks
- In person
- Payment kiosk
- Credit card
- By mail
- Money Gram
- Check Out by PayGo

Need to know more about one of these options? Visit

[sremc.com/payment-options](https://www.sremc.com/payment-options)

or call 910.892.8071.

# Be Cyber Secure

*It is Cybersecurity Awareness Month, the perfect time to improve your cyber practices.*

Here are five simple ways you can stay cyber safe, at home or at the office.

**Use strong passwords.** Did you know the most common password of 2023 is 123456? Using simple, predictable passwords like this is never a good idea. The strongest passwords meet the following criteria: 12-15 characters, including numbers, special characters and lowercase and uppercase letters. If you struggle with remembering passwords, try using a password manager or password phrases.

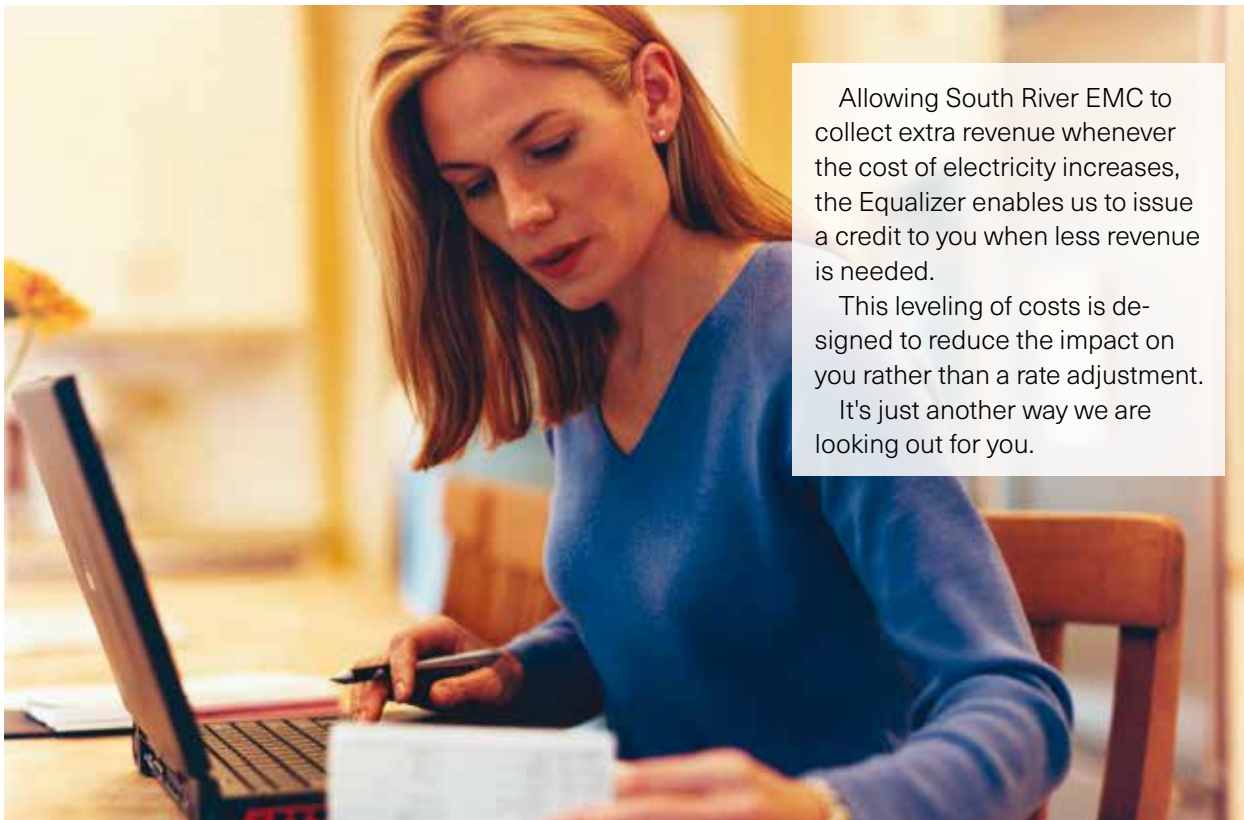
**Enable multi-factor authentication.** Multi-factor authentication decreases the likelihood of a breach by adding an additional form of authentication. So, if your password is hacked or stolen, the bad actor still has a hurdle to overcome to access your data.

**Recognize phishing.** You've likely received an email with urgent language and a myriad of typos and grammatical errors saying you need to "update your payment information" or "make a payment immediately". Emails like this are typically phishing scams. Legitimate businesses will not email or text with a link to update your payment information.

**Stay protected while connected.** Whatever the device, the best defense against viruses and malware is to update to the latest security software, web browser and operating system. Sign up for automatic updates if possible and protect your devices with anti-virus software.

**Secure your network against cyber threats.** Computers, smartphones, TVs, thermostats, doorbells—the list of internet-connected devices is ever-growing! Securing your modem, router and Wi-Fi can keep your home network safe from cyber threats.

Practicing good cyber hygiene is essential to keeping data secure.



Allowing South River EMC to collect extra revenue whenever the cost of electricity increases, 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.

It's just another way we are looking out for you.

## All Things Being Equal



## HVAC Upgrades Eligible For Rebate?

South River EMC offers rebates on the purchase of high efficiency heat pumps, that is heat pumps with a seasonal energy efficiency ratio<sup>2</sup>, or SEER2 rating, of 16 or above. SEER measures the cooling

efficiency of a heat pump, so the higher the SEER, the more efficient the system.

For details on the rebate and requirements visit [sremc.com/energy-star-heating-cooling](https://sremc.com/energy-star-heating-cooling).

## Federal Tax Credit Incentives

By taking advantage of a rebate from South River EMC, you could also find yourself eligible for a federal tax credit as well.

Currently, federal energy efficiency credits are available for central AC for up to \$600; air source heat pumps or mini-split systems for up to \$2,000; insulation replacement for up to \$1,200; Energy Star

certified heat pump water heaters for up to \$2,000; and windows for up to \$600.

Those upgrades could add up to even more with these incentives, so don't be afraid to check them out.

For details on the federal rebates being offered, visit [energystar.gov](https://energystar.gov) and search "federal".

## Improving Comfort And Cost With Weatherization

Weatherizing your home helps you save money by saving energy, and it can also improve the comfort of your home.

By reducing the amount of air leaking in and out of your home you also improve durability and create a healthier indoor environment.

Caulking and weatherstripping are two simple and effective air-sealing techniques. Caulk is generally used for cracks and openings between stationary house components such as around door and window frames, and weatherstripping is used

to seal components that move, such as doors and windows.

If a community action program performs the weatherization work, you could be eligible for a rebate. In order to qualify, the entire weatherization package must be completed.

The package can be performed on a single family or manufactured low-income home. For details, visit [sremc.com/weatherization](https://sremc.com/weatherization).

## Windows Can Get Drafty, Replacement Necessary?

Windows offer a view, but as they age, they could offer a draft. Drafts impact comfort, which impacts cost.

Perhaps you're feeling a draft, or the windows aren't as clear as they used to be, you could replace one or more windows for a rebate.

South River EMC offers a rebate on window replacements in a site-built or manufactured home with electric heat and AC for up to \$200.

For details on the rebate visit [sremc.com/energy-star-windows](https://sremc.com/energy-star-windows).

## Water Heating Options For Consideration

If you've looked at replacing your water heater, you might have seen there are a lot of options out there.

Your standard electric water heater, which heats up water periodically throughout the day to ensure you have warm water when you need it. Helpful, but impractical, particularly if you aren't at home during the day.

That may encourage you to consider an on-demand water heater. While it can be an energy saving choice for gas water heating, it isn't much of a saver for electric water heating. The burst of energy used to heat water on-demand has been said to be the equal to a conventional water heater's periodic heating in a day.

You might then think of solar water heating, which uses a free resource, the sun, to heat water. The system, as well as the back up, is not free. You want to ensure your roof mounted system will not break any building covenants, as well as making sure you

have the best solar resource. After all, you don't want to install a system only to realize it doesn't get anywhere the amount of sun needed to heat your water. An electric back-up is great to have for days of high use and low sun.

What about heat pump water heating? Moving heat rather than generating it makes this type of system 2-3 times more efficient. They do have temperature (40-90 degree year-round) and space (1,000 cu. ft.) requirements, but their savings potential can make up for their additional purchase cost.

Doing the research ahead of time allows you to make the most efficient choice when water heater replacement is necessary. It also allows you to learn about the rebate opportunities offered by South River EMC.

For details visit [sremc.com/energy-efficient-water-heating](https://sremc.com/energy-efficient-water-heating).



Message from Advise Guy Robby Talton



## Be Prepared For Severe Weather

Having an emergency plan in place is vital to how safe you and your family are when severe weather strikes. Making sure your family is safe is most important, but having an emergency plan can make a big difference after a storm. Many of you remember the impact hurricanes Fran, Matthew, and Florence had on our area.

As a member of South River EMC, you can receive a free, no obligation quote on a whole home generator by simply calling or e-mailing us. We collect your information and a contractor will call you to set up an on-site appointment. They look at the size/load of your home/panel to determine which generator size is best. Keep in mind that you will need to have natural gas or propane for the generator to run. Most gas companies will give you free quotes on the cost of setting a tank and running lines. We recommend that you shop around so you can compare prices and get the best deal.

If you decide to install your own portable generator, safety needs to be a top priority with a portable generator. The primary potential hazards are carbon monoxide poisoning from engine exhaust, electrocution, fire and burns. GenerLink provides a safe and convenient way to connect a portable generator. It simply plugs into the meter base and the meter plugs into it. This will need to be installed by a licensed electrician and we need to be contacted to assist with access to the meter base. It is also important to note that a plug-in transfer switch like GenerLink is not compatible with the whole house surge protection device sold by South River EMC, due to grounding issues.

South River EMC offers surge protection as well. Residential electrical systems and appliances have

become more sophisticated.

With that, they have also

become more sensitive. All it

takes is a minor spike in volt-

age to cause issues with sensitive electronic devices in the home. South River EMC offers whole house surge protection as well as smaller plug-in types.

Surge suppressors protect sensitive electronic devices by diverting surges to the ground. Adding a second plug-in type device offers a two-stage approach for superior protection for the most sensitive equipment like computers and televisions. All Strike Guard surge protection equipment will be installed by South River EMC employees. Products can be found online at [sremc.com/surge-protection](http://sremc.com/surge-protection). Prior to installation, technicians will check your home grounding system to ensure it is adequate and can support the surge protection equipment.

Along with the items mentioned in this article, you can take steps at home to be prepared and it starts with an emergency plan. Make sure you have flashlights and batteries available. Stock up on food, supplies, and medicine to last a few days. Don't panic and buy everything you see. Make sure you have fuel in your vehicles. Charge up electronic devices and power-banks before a storm hits. If you have medical equipment, you need to make sure you have some type of battery back up to run it. We try to get power restored as quickly and safely as possible, but as stated earlier, sometimes it is out of our hands. All of these actions you can take should be the first thing you do before moving on to larger items such as generators. Please contact [AdviseGuys@sremc.com](mailto:AdviseGuys@sremc.com) for more information.



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