

South River EMC Communicator

August 2024

Refund Allocated

As a not-for-profit cooperative, we give money back! We don't have stockholders. We aren't a sole proprietorship. What we are is a cooperative, which means that we are owned by each person who has an electric account with our company.

That's you, you're part of something special—you're a member.

So, at the end of each year, after all bills are paid, any remaining amount, called margins, is allocated to be refunded to members as capital credits. Once we completed our audit for 2023, the allocation of the margins was made.

Our end-of-year margins totaled \$1,986,009.98 or 0.0200484830 percent of revenues.

What does this mean to you? If your electric bills in 2023 totaled \$1,000, then you would be earmarked to receive a refund of \$20.04. The refund will be returned as \$4 in November and the remaining \$16.04 in 19 years. The amount retained for 19 years is used as operating capital by the Cooperative.

Capital credits are typically retired in November. Members whose refund is less than \$100 will receive a bill credit. Members whose refund is \$100 or greater will receive a check.

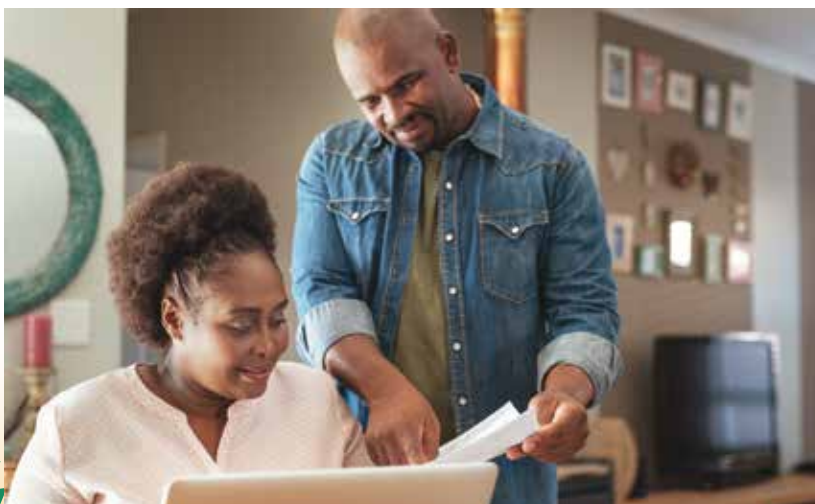
If you think you, or a family member, might have an unclaimed capital credit refund, visit sremc.com/capital-credits and see if your name appears on the list. If so, download the claim form and submit it to our office.

You can trust that we are always looking out for you, whether it's in our daily work or refunding your money. We are all in this together.



Reminder:

School is back in session this month so be aware on the road.



South River EMC earns this award based on data modeled by the ACSI® in 2023. Award criteria are determined by the ACSI based on customers rating their satisfaction with South River EMC in a survey independent of the syndicated ACSI Energy Utility Study. For more about the ACSI, visit theacsi.org/ badges. ACSI and its logo are registered trademarks of the American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC.

New Battery Installation With South River EMC

In an effort to enhance system resilience and reliability to members, South River EMC is adding a 10-megawatt (MW) battery storage project at Butler substation in Hope Mills to its existing arsenal of demand response tools.

This is in addition to the installation of a 2.5-megawatt battery at one of our substations in Cumberland County, as well as a 500-kilowatt solar plus battery project at a substation in Sampson County.

The Butler substation project is nearing completion and will help not only the Cooperative, but North Carolina's electric cooperatives as a whole.

It is one of 17 battery projects deployed in rural locations, which will collectively provide 90 MWs of power, and will be charged when demand for electricity is low, and discharged during moments of peak demand for power.

This enhances electric reliability and is expected to



provide cost savings over the lifetime of the batteries.

Because cooperatives are not-for-profit, members will benefit from those savings.

Installation of this most-recent battery energy storage system was completed earlier this year as one of a growing collection of distributed-energy resources including the microgrid at Butler Farms in Lillington.

By adding these battery projects and with participating in programs like Watt Watchers, and Connect To Save, we are working to move energy use from a peak time, the few critical hours when the most people are using the most electricity, all at the same time, to a lower use time.

This collaboration works to keep costs down for all of us. We thank you for your participation in these programs and ask that if you are interested in participating you visit our web site at sremc.com/watt-watchers, or check out Connect To Save under [sremc.com>My Home & Business> Residential Members> Connect To Save](https://sremc.com/My Home & Business/Residential Members/Connect To Save).

South River EMC and the network of cooperatives in North Carolina have worked together for years to lead innovative energy strategies, including community solar, microgrids, demand-response programs and solar plus storage initiatives.



They Gave Us The A's!

Each year, South River EMC awards gift cards to a total of 30 students who have received at least one A on his or her most recent report card.

The "Give Us An A program" awards 15 gift cards in February and July of each year.

Congratulations to the following students:

Rayden Bradley

Midway Elementary

James Belprez

Northwood Temple Academy

Presley Foley

Freedom Christian Academy

Jack Bullard

Fayetteville Academy

Allen Strickland

Meadow School

Skylar Bullard

Mac Williams Middle

Makyleigh Smith

Riverside Christian Academy

Laura Wood

Sampson Early College High

Emma Kelly

Anderson Creek Academy

Dylan Whitman

Overhills Middle

Jackson Lee

Hobpton Middle

Ashley Davis

Cape Fear High

Izabella Urena

Riverside Christian Academy

Brandon Morgan

Overhills High

Thomas Bullard

Cape Fear High

Keep those grades up, the next drawing will take place in February 2025.

Bright Ideas Early Bird Deadline Approaches

The Bright Ideas early bird deadline is this month!

So, this isn't your last chance, but your time is running short, especially as both you and your students prepare to return to school.

Planning for the new school year and engaging students and their different learning styles

takes preparation, planning, and funding.

Oftentimes, it requires teachers to spend their own money on classroom materials.

That's why South River EMC's Bright Ideas grant program is perfect for teachers in public, K-12 schools, who have bright, innovative, classroom-based ideas.

In the past, the Cooperative has awarded over \$50,000 per year to local educators.

Since 1994, educators statewide have received \$16 million to fund over 14,700 projects affecting 3.5 million students.

South River EMC has funded \$1.6 million locally.

Grants can be written for any amount up to \$2,500 and for any subject.

If you are a local educator with an innovative idea, apply at ncbrightideas.com by Sept. 15.

If you submit your application by Aug. 15, you may be eligible to win a \$100 Visa gift card.

For questions, visit sremc.com/bright-ideas, apply online at ncbrightideas.com.



Things To Know About Power Restoration

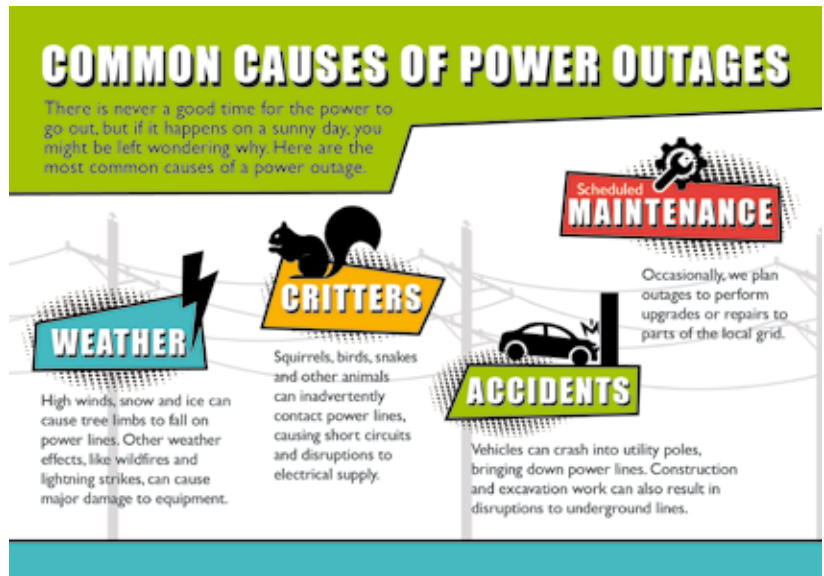
Have you ever watched a video or TV show where a person is cooking a meal, then suddenly, they snap their fingers, and the meal is plated and ready to eat? That's called a jump cut.

While we wish we could "jump cut" from a power outage to power restoration, it can often take a lot more effort and people to make it happen.

We are accustomed to questions about power outages and why it can take time to get power restored. Given our reliance on electricity, there's simply never a good time to be without it.

This month, we'd like to shed light on our restoration process to help you understand what may be happening behind the scenes. Here are 10 things you might not know about restoration:

- ▶ **We need you.** When your power goes out, it might be just at your home or small section of a neighborhood. There is a chance we may not know about it, and no one has reported it. We rely on you to let us know if your power is out. You can do so by text, using our app, or phoning it into our automated phone system, read up on details how at sremc.com/outage-center.
- ▶ **Our employees might be impacted too.** Because South River EMC is a local electric cooperative owned by the members we serve, our employees are local too. They are your neighbors, friends and familiar community volunteers. When you're



without power, our people might be too.

- ▶ **It's a team effort.** South River EMC's employees are working to get your power restored as soon as possible. Our member service representatives are taking your calls, engineers and field staff are surveying damage, our vegetation management team is clearing hazards, dispatchers are organizing crews, and communicators are keeping everyone informed of progress or potential dangers. When your power goes out, we all work together as quickly and safely as possible to get you back to normal.
- ▶ **We assess the situation first.** Every outage is different, and we don't know how dangerous it is or what equipment might need to be replaced. When responding to outages, we first need to see what happened, then figure out what materials we need and a plan for how to fix the problem(s) without compromising electric flow for the rest of our members.
- ▶ **Restoration is normally prioritized by number.** We look to see the largest number of members who can be restored to service in the shortest amount of time. Our crews focus on responding first to public safety issues and critical services like hospitals. Then we complete work that impacts the largest of number of people first.
- ▶ **Our employees face many dangers.** Besides working around high voltage electricity, our crews are on alert for wild animals, weather elements, falling trees and fast-moving cars. (If you ever drive past one of our vehicles, please do so slowly.)

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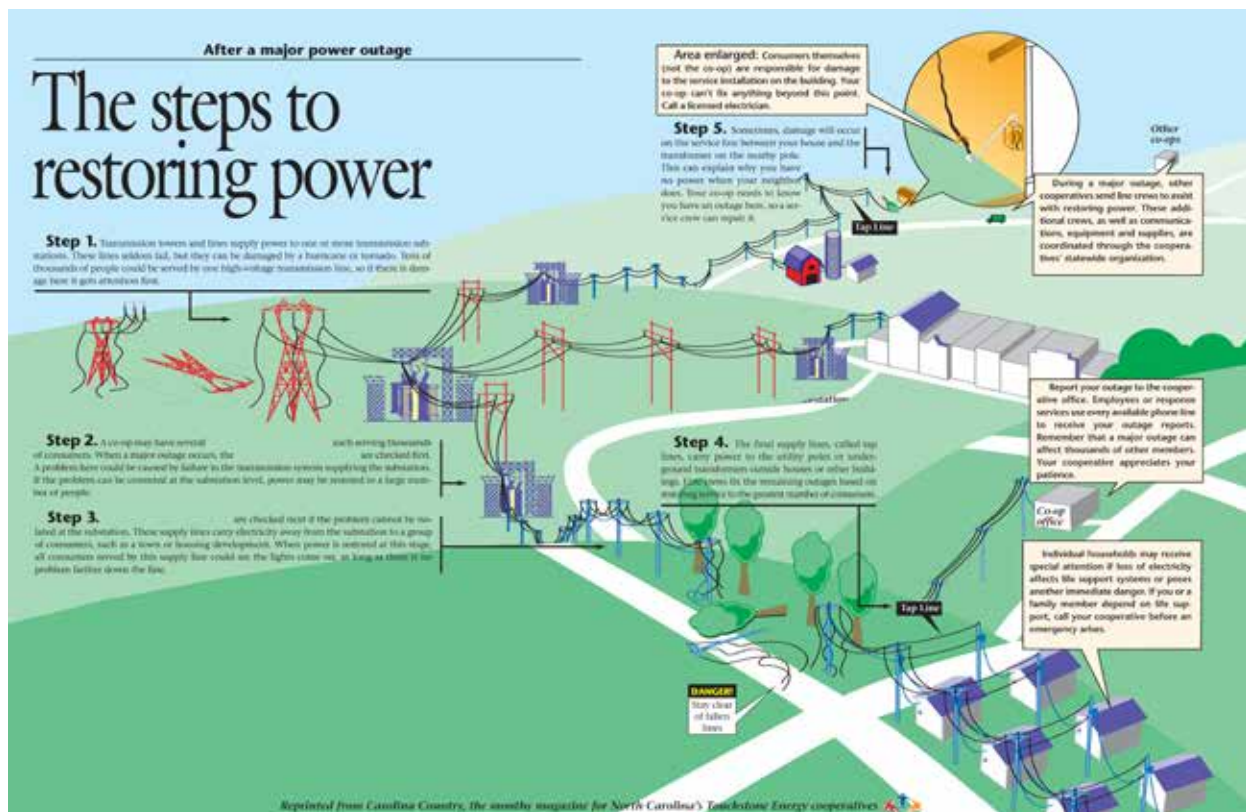
- ▶ **Flickering lights are a good thing.** Some folks mistake flickering lights for outages, but these “blinks” are important because they indicate our equipment worked and prevented a possible outage likely caused by wayward animals or stray tree limbs on the lines.
- ▶ **You need a backup plan.** We do our best to help those who need it, but if you depend on electricity for life support purposes, you must have a back-up plan—remember, we don’t always know how long restoration efforts will take. If you’re

- ▶ unsure what to do, call us so we can help you prepare.
- ▶ **Our employees have to plan, and eat.** If you ever see our trucks in a restaurant parking lot while your power is out, know that sometimes our employees huddle in a safe, common area to map out their plan for getting your power back on. Also, our crews work long hard hours during outages and need to take time for meals just like everyone else.
- ▶ **Sometimes we also have to wait.** Our portion of the power grid is connected to other electric utilities, and we maintain positive

relationships with power providers interconnected to our system. If our outage is due to an issue from their feed into our system, we must let them do their repairs and be mindful of what they’re going through to fix it.

We do our best to avoid power disruptions, but they are inevitable from time to time. If the lights go out, know that your Cooperative is working as quickly and safely as possible to restore power.

If you experience an outage, please let us know by reporting it via text, app or by phone.





Replacing Windows For Comfort

Looking to replace windows in your home? If so, take advantage

of the rebate offered by South River EMC. For details visit

sremc.com/energy-star-windows.

Consider An Upgrade Before Season's End

Pools are great for summer fun and cooling off, however they can be costly to maintain.

And as we approach the return to school, pool savings might not be high on the priority list. But we know that the pool season can extend beyond that return to school, so why not look for some deals?

Start with your pool pump, as most pools tend to come with a single-speed one. That means one speed, usually the highest, for all tasks.

By replacing your existing pump with a variable or two-speed pump, you could save energy and water. A pump that offers different speeds for tasks

can be used more efficiently than a single-speed pump using one speed.

By updating your existing pool pump you can help cut costs for your end of summer swims. Plus, South River EMC offers a rebate, for more information visit sremc.com/pool-pumps.

Is A HERO Home For You?

High efficiency residential options, or HERO, homes are built 30 percent more efficient than homes built to standard building code.

This is done with slightly better insulation, fenestration, air sealing, equipment, and lighting packages to deliver these savings. Now, it's not something you do spur of the moment, particularly

if you want the savings and the rebates offered on HERO certified homes.

The prescriptive path is the way to go if you want a list of specific requirements to meet.

The performance path requires an energy cost analysis as the proof that the home will have energy costs less than or equal to that same home built to prescrip-

tive requirements.

For information on the high efficiency residential option visit energycodes.gov. If you're interested in the rebate offered by South River EMC visit sremc.com/hero-program.

Make Sure Your Water Heater Is Right For You

A hot shower cleans the dirt of the day, or is the start to your early morning grind.

Whatever the case, having heat-

ed water is a necessity, and when your water heater needs replacing, you should be prepared.

South River EMC offers rebates

on heat pump water heaters and solar water heating systems.

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

A Little Weatherization Helps

Heating and cooling your home can be costly, and making sure your home is weatherized is part of the battle to save.

A little infiltration, or the loss of inside air out and vice versa, is normal and expected, however too much infiltration creates

discomfort.

By allowing Community Action to make improvements you can not only improve comfort, and cost, but also be eligible for a rebate.

The weatherization package for single family or manufactured

low-income homes includes: 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.

For more information visit [sremc.com/weatherization](https://www.sremc.com/weatherization).

Keeping Cool Adds Up

As we enter the dog days of summer, our heating and cooling systems are put to the test.

Inevitably this adds up and you see it on your electric bill. While there are ways to save, sometimes replacement is the best option.

When it comes to selecting a

new heating and cooling unit your most important option to look at is efficiency.

The efficiency of a system is measured by the seasonal energy efficiency ratio, or SEER rating. The higher the SEER rating, the more efficient a system is at heating and cooling. You want to

look at higher efficiency systems because they can handle those hot days more efficiently.

If you're in the market for a new system, look to efficiency and you could be eligible for a rebate.

For details visit [sremc.com/energy-star-heating-cooling](https://www.sremc.com/energy-star-heating-cooling).



Message from Advise Guy Aaron Jackson



The summer heat is upon us. Through June and July we've seen several days where the heat index has been well over 100 degrees. Sustained temperatures at those levels strain the grid due to the high demand for electricity and they also strain our wallets, through higher electric bills.

There are two ways to lessen the impact the summer heat has on your electric bill: efficiency measures and billing/rate programs. Today I want to give you an overview of both.

Basic Energy Efficiency & Best Practices

The surest way to lower your energy cost this time of year is through basic efficiency measures you can implement at very little cost to you.

First, the thermostat setting is the primary factor in how long your AC unit has to run. Leave it set in the area of 78 degrees for maximum efficiency.

To promote air flow, open all interior doors inside the home and all vents in all rooms; make sure your HVAC return filters are clean.

Closing shutters, blinds, and curtains is a great way to limit the solar heat gain your home absorbs during the day, making it much easier for the AC system to maintain your thermostat setting. It's also a good idea to check all windows to ensure that they are fully and tightly closed.

Use fans to move air in occupied rooms to make it more comfortable. Remember; fans cool people, not rooms, so be sure to turn off fans when you leave the room.

Billing Programs

South River EMC offers two programs that can be very helpful during the peak summer and winter months: Budget Billing and Time-of-Use rate (Switch to Save).

With Budget Billing the member is billed on a rolling 13-month average. This means that your bill is more predictable and

eliminates abrupt fluctuations. This program takes the dollar amount of the current bill, as well as the previous 12, and uses it to compute an average bill each month. The bill varies a little from month to month, but the amount should remain nearly the same year-round. This program helps eliminate the high peaks in the bill typically seen in the extreme summer and winter months. Members who have been with the cooperative at least 12 months are eligible for this program.

Our time-of-use rate encourages the member to use electricity outside of the peak use times. During the summer, the peak time is 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. and, during those four hours, the electricity cost rises drastically in order to discourage energy use. But, outside of these four hours, the cost per kilowatt hour drops to around half price when compared to the residential rate. This is a great way to save money if the ability to curtail energy use during certain times of day is possible (i.e. limiting AC runtime).

You can get more information about energy efficiency, Budget Billing, and the time-of-use rate (Switch and Save) by visiting our website at sremc.com or by contacting the Advise Guys at adviseguys@sremc.com



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