

South River EMC Communicator

April 2026

Lineworkers:

Ready When It Matters Most

As your local Cooperative, we have the unique privilege of seeing first-hand what it truly takes to keep the lights on for our members.

In April, we take time to pause and recognize the brave men and women who make that possible every single day—our lineworkers.

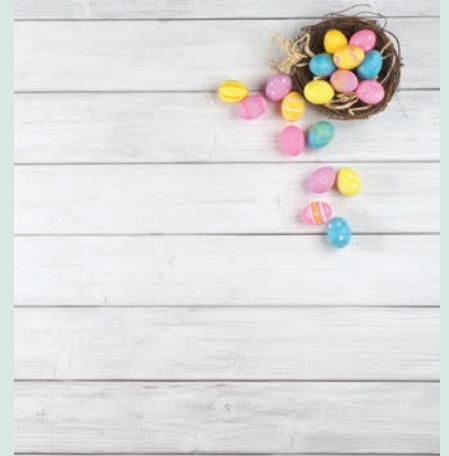
When storms impact our communities and outages occur, many people experience the inconvenience, but our lineworkers see a call to action. Our crews are always ready when it matters most—leaving family dinners, working through the night and heading into challenging conditions to restore power as safely and quickly as possible.

That readiness is not accidental. It comes from rigorous training, deep experience and a shared commitment to serving others.

What makes lineworkers especially remarkable is that they aren't just restoring power to a system—they're restoring power to their own communities. They live here. They raise their families here. They understand that electricity is more than a convenience; it's essential to daily life, to local businesses, to schools, farms and emergency services. Powering the places we call home is personal to lineworkers.

Electric cooperatives like South River EMC were built on the principle of neighbors helping neighbors, and our lineworkers embody that spirit every day. They are the first to respond and the last to leave, often

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Mark Your Calendar:

South River EMC offices will be closed Friday, April 3, in celebration of Good Friday.



South River EMC earns this award based on data modeled by the ACSI® in 2024. 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.



working long hours behind the scenes. At times, serving our neighbors means going beyond our own service territory through a process known as mutual aid. During major outage events, South River EMC crews stand ready to assist neighboring co-ops—sometimes close to home, and sometimes across state lines—to help restore power. This spirit of mutual aid strengthens all cooperatives and ultimately benefits the members we serve.

We understand any time the lights go out can be frustrating, bringing everyday life to a halt.

We are incredibly grateful to our members for your patience and encouragement during these times. Linework is demanding, physical, and at times, it can be dangerous. Our crews approach each job with a focus on safety and teamwork. They take pride in their craft and in the trust our members place in them.

On **April 23**, we will celebrate Lineworker Appreciation Day, but one day is hardly enough. Every day, we thank lineworkers for their service and dedication, which are the backbone of our cooperative.

Thank a lineworker online on that day with #ThankALineworker.

2026 Annual Meeting Details

- ▶ South River EMC's Annual Meeting of Members will take place Thursday, April 30, at 6 p.m.
- ▶ Those who register by noon on April 30 will receive a call from South River EMC via Broadnet at 6 p.m. All registered members will receive call-in/login details via email
- ▶ Your participation in the annual meeting means that you will receive a \$10 bill credit on your electric bill. You must pre-register to receive the bill credit.
- ▶ By attending the meeting, you will be entered in the prize drawing for the following week.
- ▶ Prizes will consist of \$11,500 in bill credits, featuring a grand prize of a \$3,000 credit.

Registration Details For The 2026 Annual Meeting

- ▶ Registration will take place prior to the meeting and you can do so in one of three ways: by calling South River EMC, by chat at sremc.com, or by completing the form at sremc.com/form/annual-meeting-sign-up.
 - ▶ Registration begins Monday, April 27, at 8 a.m. and ends Thursday, April 30, at 5 p.m.
 - ▶ Be sure the information you provide matches account information. Members must register prior to the meeting to receive a bill credit.
- If you are unsure of any of the required information, check your bill, review your account online or call our member service department at 910.892.8071.

Congratulations To Students!

Students have been working hard this year and 15 were drawn as recipients of the "Give Us An A" program. The following students will each receive a \$25 gift card:

Peyton Hall

Stedman Elementary

Kennede Kirk

Pine Forest High

Izabella Urena

Riverside Christian Academy

Jack Bullard

Fayetteville Academy

Aubrey Miller

South Johnston High

Bao Gladden

Massey Hill Classical School

James Belprez

Northwood Temple Academy

Kaylen Sykes

Pine Forest High

Aracelis Guerrier

Anne Chesnutt Middle

Annabelle Hall

Stedman Elementary

Ella Smith

Riverside Christian Academy

Benjamin Bullard

Clement Elementary

Michael Belprez

Northwood Temple Academy

Steffon Richardson

Gallberry Farm Elementary

Miranda Napier

Gray's Creek Middle

Our next drawing will be in July!

Teachers, The Time Is Now

If you've ever seen a teacher turn a pile of cardboard into a functioning ecosystem, you know innovation in public K-12 schools doesn't wait for perfect conditions.

It starts with a bold idea—and usually a small budget, and that's where the Bright Ideas Grant Program can help.

In offering grants of up to \$2,500 for innovative, classroom-based projects in public K-12 schools, the program supports the people who know students best: their teachers.

In the right classroom, \$2,500 isn't just funding—it's fuel.

It can launch a student-run podcast studio, transform a corner into a makerspace, spark a hydroponic garden experiment, or bring coding, robotics, or cross-curricular art projects to life.

These aren't abstract ideas dreamed up in distant boardrooms; they're practical,

creative solutions designed by educators who see firsthand what excites and motivates their students.

Professional development is not eligible for funding—this program is all about direct classroom impact.

The Bright Ideas application period opens April 1, with an Early Bird deadline of Aug. 15, meaning if you have an application submitted by this time you will be entered in a drawing to

win win one of five gift cards. The final deadline to apply is Sept. 15.

The genius of Bright Ideas is its simplicity: trust teachers, fund creativity, and let innovation grow from the ground up.

Because sometimes the distance between "What if?" and "Let's do it" is just \$2,500 or less—and a bright idea submitted on time.

To begin an application, visit ncelectriccooperatives.com/community/bright-ideas.





Less Waste. More Impact.

Over the past decade, South River EMC has saved \$2.2 million by implementing a powerful, cost-effective efficiency tool: Conservation Voltage Reduction (CVR).

CVR works behind the scenes—optimizing voltage levels across our system to reduce energy waste while maintaining reliable service. The best part?

- ▶ No new equipment for members
- ▶ No changes in consumer behavior
- ▶ No disruption to daily life

By fine-tuning how electricity is delivered, we're reducing waste, lowering system costs and strengthening long-term reliability for the communities we serve.

Efficiency doesn't always require big changes. Sometimes, it's about making smarter ones.

Interested in taking this issue or others on the go?

If so, you can sign up for our digital newsletter at sremc.com/carolina-country.

Your paper magazine may take 1-2 months to discontinue.



Spring Into Energy Savings

Spring is a season of renewal—and a great time to refresh your energy habits, too! As temperatures begin to warm and daily routines shift, a few small changes around your home can add up to meaningful energy savings.

South River EMC is committed to helping our members use energy wisely while keeping homes comfortable year-round.

Spring is the perfect time to schedule maintenance for your heating and cooling system. Spring and fall checkups conducted by a licensed professional can help ensure your system is running efficiently, safely and reliably before the peak seasons begin. A well-maintained unit uses less energy, lasts longer and helps prevent costly breakdowns when you need it most.

If you're looking for a simple place to start saving, look no further than ceiling fans. Fans don't actually cool or heat the air, but they help you feel more comfortable by moving it. During warmer months, make sure your ceiling fan blades are set to rotate counterclockwise. This creates a downward breeze that makes you feel cooler, allowing you to raise your thermostat a few degrees without sacrificing comfort. In cooler months, reverse the direction of fan blades clockwise



to help push warm air down from the ceiling, improving efficiency when your heating system is running.

Speaking of thermostats, adjusting the temperature just a few degrees can make a noticeable difference on your bill. As spring arrives, try setting your thermostat slightly higher when cooling or slightly lower when heating. Even a two- or three-degree adjustment can reduce energy use while still keeping your home comfortable—especially when combined with ceiling fans or open windows on mild, pleasant days.

Hot water use is another area where simple habits matter.

Taking shorter showers can help reduce the amount of energy used to heat water, which makes up a significant portion of most energy bills. Cutting just a few minutes off each shower not only saves energy but also conserves water.

Finally, the time of day you use energy can also play a part in savings. When you run major appliances during off-peak hours (when energy demand is lower), you can take advantage of non-peak rates and help reduce pressure on the electric grid—that's a win-win! South River EMC has a time-of-use program, details of which can be found at sremc.com/tou.

South River EMC is here to help every season, every step of the way. We offer energy-saving programs and resources designed

to help you lower energy use for your home or business and manage costs.

If you have questions or want to learn more about energy efficiency offerings and programs, visit the Advise Guys page as a jump off point. Scan the QR code now!





Make a Splash in Savings

Have a pool? South River EMC rewards energy-smart members with a rebate for installing a new variable- or two-speed pool pump.

Upgrade your old single-speed pump to cut electricity use, enjoy a quieter, more efficient pool, and get a little cash back — a win for your pool, your wallet, and

the planet.

For details on the rebate offered by South River EMC, scan the QR code.

Clear Views, Cooler Bills

South River EMC's window rebate helps members improve home comfort and efficiency. Energy-efficient windows reduce drafts, stabilize indoor temperatures,

and ease the load on heating and cooling systems.

Qualifying windows must meet efficiency standards and be installed by a licensed contractor,

helping members save energy and enjoy a more comfortable home year-round.

For details, scan the QR code.

HERO: Smarter Living, Lower Bills, Comfort That Pays Off

A HERO (High Efficiency Residential Option) home is about 30% more efficient than a standard code-built home. Benefits include:

Lower Utility Bills – Uses less energy, saving money monthly

Year-Round Comfort – Better insulation and windows

Quieter Living – Advanced windows and sealed ductwork

Healthier Air – Improved ventilation reduces allergens

Eco-Friendly – Cuts energy use and environmental impact

Higher Home Value – Energy efficiency boosts resale appeal

Durable & Long-Lasting – Efficient systems experience less strain

Future-Ready – Exceeds current energy codes for long-term savings

For details on the HERO home rebate, scan the QR code.



Weather-Smart Savings

South River EMC's weatherization rebate helps members improve home comfort and reduce energy waste through qualifying efficiency upgrades.

- Supports improvements like

air sealing and added insulation

- Helps reduce drafts, heat loss, and heat gain
- Lowers heating and cooling costs year-round
- Requires qualifying work and

documentation performed by community action

By having this work completed you could be eligible for a rebate. For details scan the QR code.

Cool Savings Ahead

South River EMC offers rebates to members who install qualifying high-efficiency heating and cooling systems, helping reduce upfront costs while improving home energy efficiency.

Members who upgrade to high-efficiency air-source heat

pumps, central air conditioners, or geothermal systems may be eligible for a rebate based on the system's efficiency rating.

Rebate amounts vary, with higher incentives available for systems meeting higher seasonal energy efficiency ratio 2 or,

SEER2, standards. Equipment must be newly installed by a licensed contractor. Rebate will be issued after submission and approval of the required documentation.

For details, scan the QR code.

Smarter Hot Water

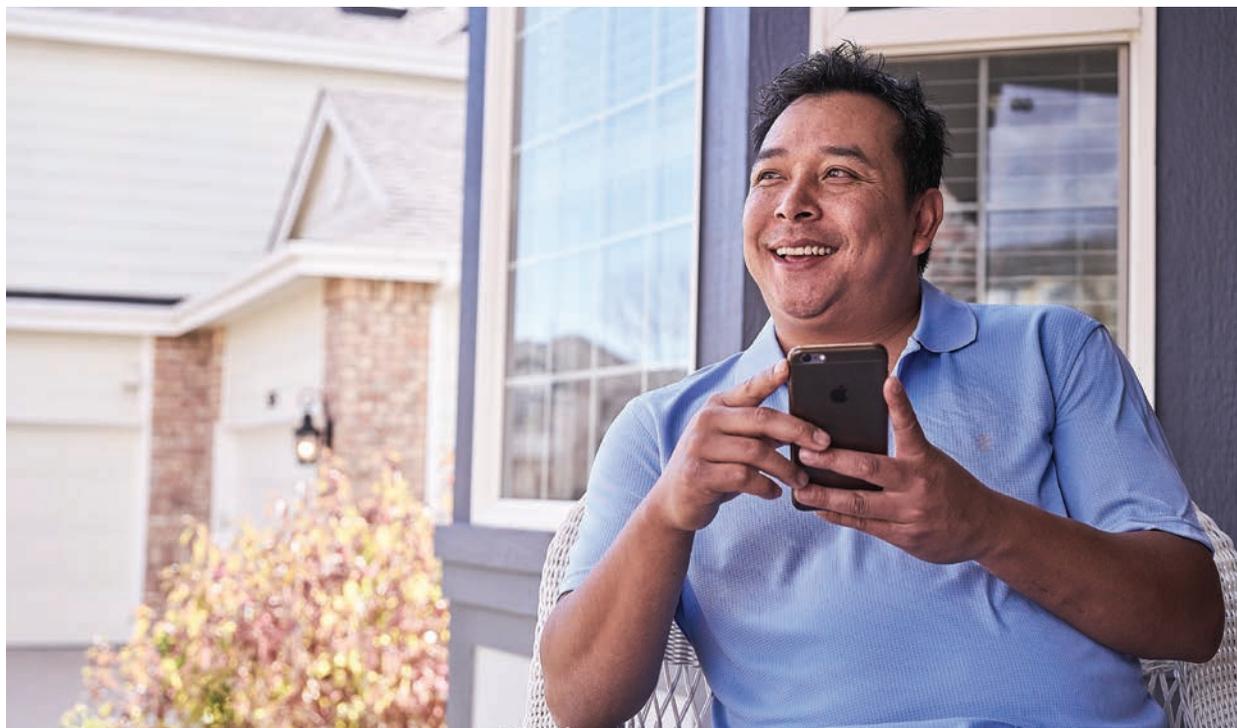
Hot water accounts for a significant portion of home energy use, which is why South River EMC encourages members to consider energy-efficient water heaters.

The cooperative offers rebates for qualifying systems such as heat pump water heaters and solar water heating units.

Heat pump water heaters work by transferring heat from the surrounding air to warm the water, using far less electricity than traditional electric models. Solar options further reduce energy use by harnessing the sun's power.

By installing a qualifying water-heating system, members can lower long-term energy consumption, reduce monthly bills, and enjoy reliable hot water year-round.

More information on systems, as well as the rebates, can be found by scanning the QR code.



Message from Advise Guy Robert Talton



Spring Into Savings: Ways to Cut Energy Costs This Season

Spring in our area brings warmer days, blooming landscapes and the perfect chance to refresh your home's energy habits. With the long cooling season just around the corner, a few smart steps now can help lower your electric bill, boost comfort, and keep your home running efficiently all year long.

Tune Up Your HVAC System

Your HVAC system works hard in our hot, humid climate, making it the biggest energy user in most homes. A little attention now can prevent big headaches later.

Key steps to take:

- Schedule a professional HVAC tune up to check refrigerant levels, clean coils, and verify efficient operation.
- Inspect refrigerant line insulation and replace any sections that are worn or damaged.
- Change return air filters regularly; inexpensive fiberglass filters offer excellent airflow.
- Maintain at least two feet of clearance around your outdoor unit by trimming shrubs and branches.
- Seal ductwork with mastic sealant to prevent leaks.
- For mobile homes, inspect drop ducts and cross-over ducts to ensure they're intact and secure.

Seal Up Your Home

Keeping conditioned air inside is one of the simplest and most cost effective ways to save energy.

Look for these common trouble spots:

- Door weather stripping—replace it if you can see sunlight around the edges.
- Attic access points and plumbing penetrations—seal gaps leading into unconditioned spaces.
- Windows—check for drafts and seal any leaks to improve overall home tightness.

Give Appliances Some Attention

A few quick wins:

- Clean refrigerator coils with a brush or vacuum to help the unit run more efficiently.
- Inspect freezer gaskets to ensure a tight seal.
- Monitor your refrigerator's run time; it should operate about 20 minutes per hour. If it runs constantly, consider upgrading to an ENERGY STAR® model for long term savings.

Take Advantage of Local Resources

South River EMC offers tools, guidance, and rebates to help members make smart energy upgrades. Whether you're replacing equipment or simply looking for ways to reduce usage, these resources can make a meaningful difference.

You can also take advantage of Energy Savers NC, which can help with improvements around your home, more information can be found at energysavernc.org.

Explore available rebates and discover more energy saving tips at sremc.com/adviseguys.



South River EMC
Communicator

PO Box 931
Dunn, NC 28335
910.892.8071
800.338.5530
sremc.com



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