South River EMC
Communicator
June 2026

Lineworkers Bring Electricity to Rural Guatemalan Village

This spring, South River EMC lineworkers extended the co-op mission of powering rural communities to Guatemala, helping bring electricity to the village of El Plan Nuevo Amanecer.

Derek Avery and Daniel Purvis, both first class linemen, joined a team of 15 volunteers from eight North Carolina electric cooperatives to build the system from the ground up.

Over the span of three weeks, crews constructed three miles of line that powered more than 50 homes, a school, two churches and the community's only health clinic. Lacking access to bucket trucks and heavy machinery, volunteers relied on manual labor, lifting transformers exceeding 300 pounds and pulling long spans of line across dense vegetation and rugged terrain.

Traveling more than 2,800 miles from home, crews say the experience was both challenging and rewarding.

"The hardest part of this trip were the conditions. It was upper 90s to low 100s with high humidity, and we were doing everything the old-school way; it definitely pushed you physically," said Purvis.

"The language barrier and heat were the hardest," said Avery. "They speak a more localized Spanish, so it took some time."

The trip was coordinated through North Carolina Electric Cooperatives' Brighter World Initiative, in partnership with the National

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Have Wi-Fi, Will Save

You can adjust a smart thermostat from anywhere with wi-fi to save money.

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.

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Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA) International Foundation, which brings electricity to communities around the world.

Both lineworkers felt the most rewarding part were the children of the village and everyone celebrating when the power came on.

For villages like El Plan Nuevo Amanecer, access to reliable power can be life-changing. With electricity, students will have greater opportunities to learn, while existing and new businesses can grow. Beyond those opportunities, safety will also improve as streets and homes are now illuminated after dark.

"Watching the locals flip the switch for the first time and seeing lights come on in their homes is something I'll never forget," said Purvis. "It's going to change their day-to-day lives immediately."

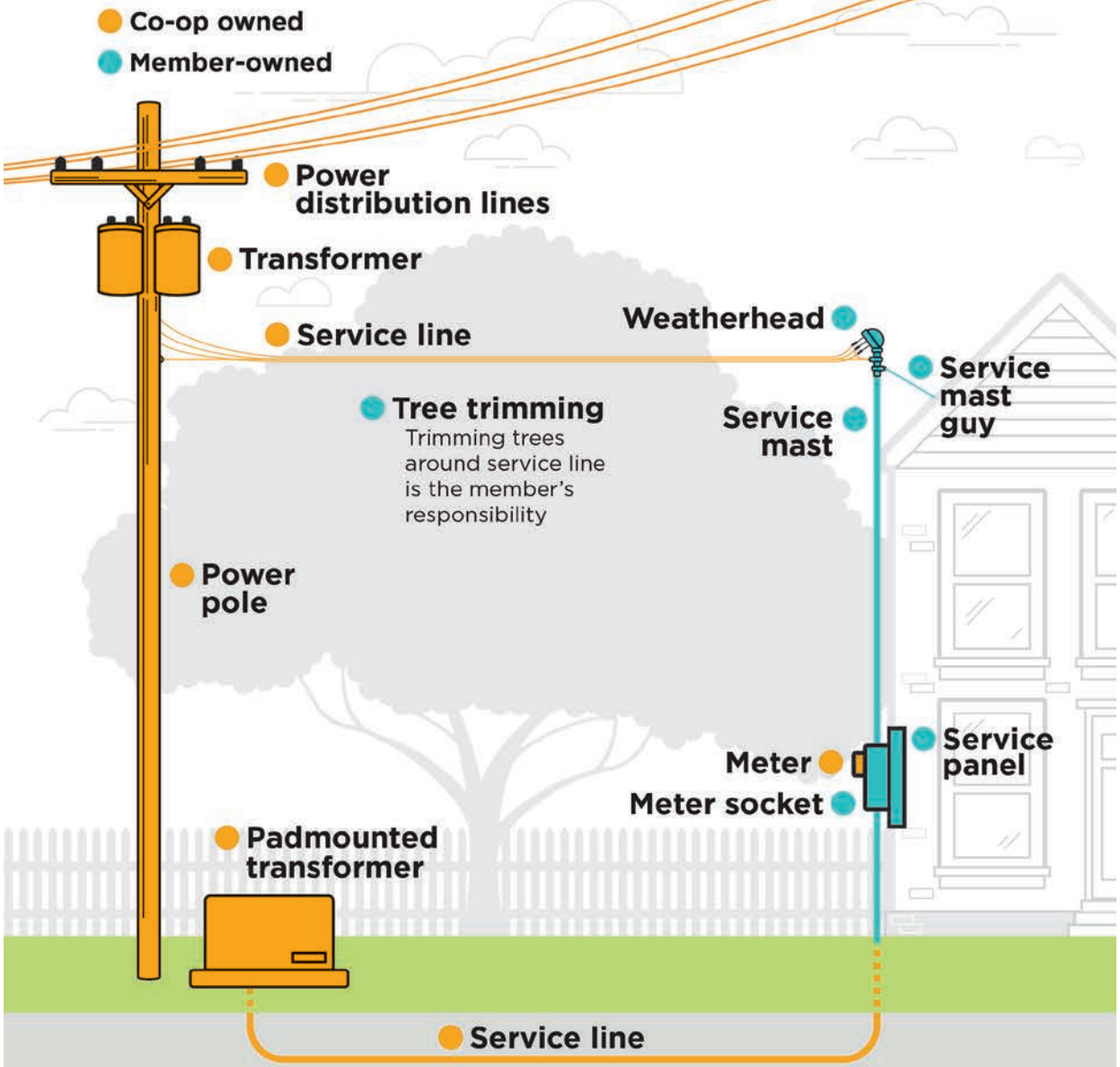
In addition to powering the village, North Carolina's electric cooperatives also provided each home with electric burner stove tops, offering families a safer alternative to cooking with open fire indoors, and donated medical supplies to help support the community's health clinic.

To mark the project's completion, community members, local leaders and volunteers gathered at the school for a ribbon-cutting ceremony and celebration. Volunteers were honored with plaques, and a commemorative sign was installed in the village to recognize the achievement.

Who Owns What?

Electric Co-op Owned Equipment vs Member-Owned Equipment

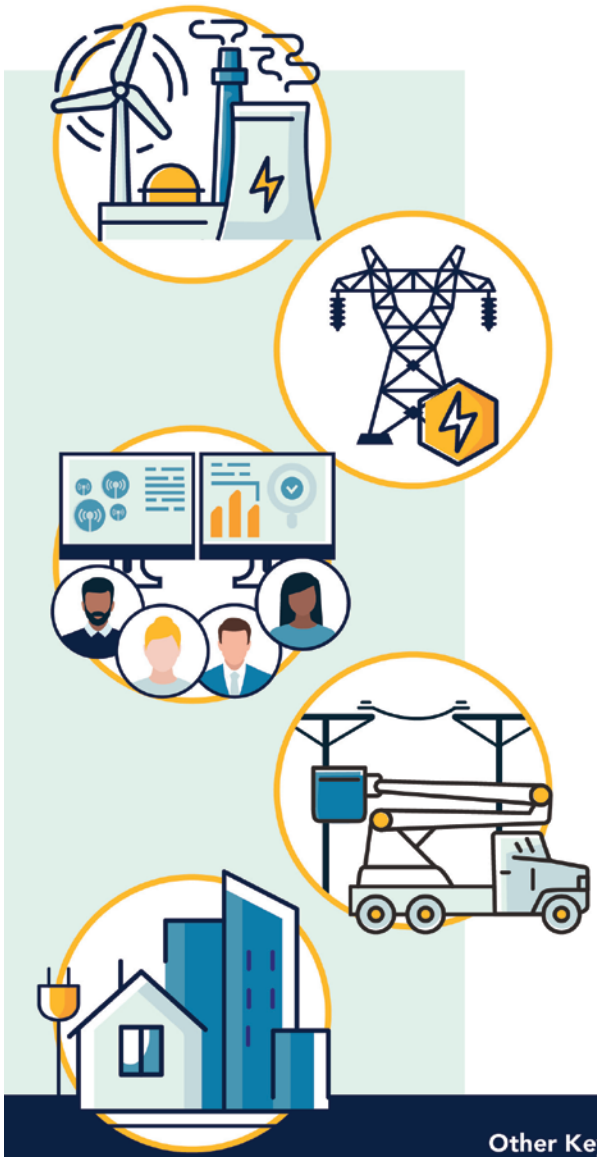
This graphic depicts equipment owned by the co-op (in gold) and the member (in blue). If a storm damages any equipment owned by the co-op, we are responsible for repairs. If a storm damages any member-owned equipment, the member is responsible for repairs. Members should hire a licensed electrician when making any repairs to member-owned equipment.



Note: This graphic depicts overhead and underground service. Please be aware of which type of service you receive at your home or business.

Grid Power Players

Electricity is available with the flip of a switch, but it travels great distances and is coordinated among multiple entities before it reaches your home or business. Take a look at the grid power players that ensure you receive reliable electricity.



1. Generation Owners & Operators

Power plants can be owned and operated by electric utilities, government entities or other private companies. Power plants produce electricity by converting energy from various sources—like natural gas, coal, nuclear, or renewables—into electricity.

2. Transmission System Owners & Operators

The transmission grid moves large amounts of electricity over long distances using high-voltage transmission lines attached to large towers. Like power plants, these lines can be owned by a variety of public and private companies.

3. Organized Wholesale Markets

In many parts of the country, Regional Transmission Organizations (RTOs) & Independent System Operators (ISOs) coordinate the flow of electricity across regions by balancing supply and demand in real time and managing the dispatch of electric generation and transmission across large areas with the participation of generation and transmission owners.

4. Electric Utilities (That's Us!)

Electric distribution utilities take electricity from the transmission system and deliver it to homes and businesses through lower-voltage distribution lines. They also maintain local power lines, poles and other essential equipment.

5. End Users (That's You!)

End users consist of the homes, businesses and industries that consume electricity. Their demand drives how much electricity is generated and how the grid is managed in real time.

Other Key Players:

NERC: The regulatory authority that develops and enforces mandatory, reliability standards for the North American bulk electric grid. (Standards are developed through a stakeholder process.)

FERC: Independent federal agency that oversees interstate transmission and wholesale electricity sales, ensuring fair access to the grid.

Replace Windows: See Savings?

Upgrading your home's windows is an effective way to improve energy efficiency.

Old windows can be leaky, among other things, and could be costing you more than you want.

South River EMC offers a rebate on qualifying window installations, helping to offset the upfront cost of replacement.

For details on the rebate, scan the QR code.

Keep Your Pool Clean, For Less

Upgrading your pool pump isn't just about keeping water moving—it's a chance to cut costs.

Single-speed pumps operate at one constant, high speed, consuming more energy and water than necessary.

In contrast, variable and dual-speed pumps are built for efficiency. Dual-speed pumps offer two speeds for tasks. While not as customizable as variable-speed models, they still deliver meaningful energy savings.

Variable-speed pumps can be fine-tuned to match your pool's exact needs, reducing energy consumption by up to 50% or more.

For information on the rebate, scan the QR code.

Save With A HERO Home

Building or purchasing a high-efficiency home is one of the most impactful ways to reduce long-term energy costs.

A High Efficiency Residential Option, or HERO, home is built to be more efficient—using at least 30% less energy than a home built to code.

HERO homes achieve these savings through improvements to the home's overall structure, including tighter construction, enhanced insulation, high-efficiency lighting, and better-performing windows and HVAC systems.

A HERO home makes it easier to invest in a home that is built for efficiency from the ground up—delivering lasting savings, enhanced comfort, and long-term value for members.

South River EMC offers rebates on HERO homes.

Scan the QR code for details.

The Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio Counts

Heating and cooling account for a large portion of a home's energy use, making system efficiency especially important.

Modern systems are rated using the Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio 2 (SEER2). SEER2 measures how efficiently an air conditioner or heat pump cools your home over an entire season.

The higher the SEER2 rating, the more efficient the system. Upgrading from an older unit to a high-SEER2 model can lead to significant energy savings, especially during peak summer months.

South River EMC offers rebates on efficient systems, scan the QR code for details.

Consider Energy-Efficient Water Heaters

Upgrading your water heater is a simple way to improve your home's energy efficiency.

Heat pump water heaters are one of the most efficient options, moving heat from the surrounding air into the water, rather than generating it directly.

Interested in renewable energy? Solar water heaters are another option. They use energy from the sun to heat water, lowering reliance on electricity and providing savings.

Energy-efficient water heaters provide lasting value through lower operating costs, improved performance, and longer lifespans.

Making the switch to a high-efficiency water heater is an investment that can benefit both your home and budget. For details scan the QR code.

Weatherize To Promote Comfort And Savings

Improving your home's efficiency doesn't always require major equipment upgrades—sometimes the biggest savings come from sealing and insulating what you already have.

Weatherization focuses on strengthening your home's building envelope.

Improvements like air and duct sealing, added insulation and weather stripping help keep conditioned air inside, reducing the workload on your heating and cooling system. These upgrades can lead to lower energy costs and more consistent indoor temperatures throughout the year.

If Community Action performs their weatherization package, members could be eligible for a rebate as well.

For complete details, scan the QR code.

Message from Advise Guy Eric Gainey

14 Ways to Lower Your Energy Bill This Summer

Summer brings intense heat and humidity—putting your cooling system under constant strain. However, a few adjustments can significantly reduce energy use without sacrificing comfort.

Here are 14 practical ways to stay cool and save money this summer.

1. Set Thermostats for Efficiency
- Set to 78°F when home and increase it when away
- Each degree higher can reduce cooling costs by 2–3%
- Setting temperatures much lower than 78°F dramatically increases energy use.
- Use a programmable or smart thermostat

2. Set Multiple Thermostats the Same
- Keep thermostats at the same setting, it prevents one unit from overworking or sitting idle
- Helps balance cooling throughout the home

3. Keep Fans Set to AUTO
- Use AUTO so it only runs during cooling cycles
- If you run the fan continuously, it increases energy use

4. Change Air Filters Monthly
- Replace filters every 30 days. Dirty air filters restrict air flow and force systems to work harder.
- Use thin fiberglass filters

5. Block Heat from Sun
- Close blinds or curtains during peak afternoon hours, focusing on south- and west-facing windows

6. Use Ceiling Fans to Feel Cooler
- Use fans in occupied rooms and turn them off when you leave

7. Seal Air Leaks Around Doors and Windows
- Check for gaps/drafts. Look for light penetrating around the door
- Add weatherstripping or caulk where needed

8. Check Attic Access Points
- Make sure attic doors or pull-down stairs close tightly
- Consider installing an attic tent or cover

9. Keep Supply Vents and Returns Clear
- Keep vents fully open
- Move furniture away from returns

10. Open Interior Doors for Better Circulation
- Keep doors open to allow even cooling, it prevents hot and cold spots

11. Make Sure Your Outdoor Unit Is Running
- Confirm the outdoor compressor/condenser is running
- If not, the system needs attention

12. Schedule a Cooling System Check-Up
- Clean coils and check refrigerant levels
- Ensure proper airflow and operation
- Do this in the spring before heat intensifies

13. Avoid Using Heat-Producing Appliances During the Day
- Run dryers in the early morning or late evening
- Less indoor heat reduces cooling demand
- Avoid stove/oven use during peak afternoon hours and use grills, microwaves, or slow cookers instead

14. Optimize Pool Pump Run Time
- Avoid running 24/7
- Run during off-peak hours or overnight
- Variable-speed pumps can reduce energy use

For more information on ways to save, visit **sremc.com**.

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