



South River EMC Communicator

CREDITS IN EDUCATION

In late 2019, Harnett County schools took their \$41,500 capital credit refund and put it into the career and technical education, or CTE, department.

"Harnett County Schools CTE serves students in grades 6-12," said Justin Wilkinson, director of Career and Technical Education at Harnett County schools. "Program areas include: agricultural, business, career development, family and consumer sciences; health science, marketing and entrepreneurship, trade, and industrial educations."

Once the school system received its capital credit refund, Superintendent Dr. Aaron Fleming placed the money into the CTE budget, where he knew it would be well spent. The CTE department, in turn, offered grants to teachers to help provide resources and funding for projects that their standard CTE budget would not fund.

"CTE is a pretty special program area when it comes to public education. We receive three different funding sources: federal, state, and local," said Wilkinson.



Teacher William Battle explains alternative food and plant production thanks to his grant.

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South River EMC offices will be closed Monday, July 5, in celebration of Independence Day.

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The Power of Cooperative Membership

As a local, not-for-profit cooperative, South River EMC is committed to creating a brighter future for our members and our community. Beyond providing safe, reliable, sustainable and affordable power, our cooperative partners with educators, students and local organizations to support scholarships, grants, community programs and economic development.

Bright Ideas Education Grants

Local K-12 teachers bring learning to life each year with help from the cooperative's Bright Ideas Education Grants. Since 1994, thousands of students in our community have participated in creative projects stemming from \$1.4 million in grant funding; \$59,952 in 2020 alone. Teachers are encouraged to visit ncbrightideas.com and submit your creative ideas for consideration.

Community Investment

South River EMC has a series of scholarships that are offered to help local students offset the cost of a college education. We offer a scholarship to Central Carolina Community College, Fayetteville Technical Community College, Johnston Community College and Sampson Community. Additionally, we offer four scholarships for students heading to a university, as well as two scholarships to line worker school annually. Students selected to attend the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour

are also provided with a scholarship.

The Electric Cooperative Youth Tour

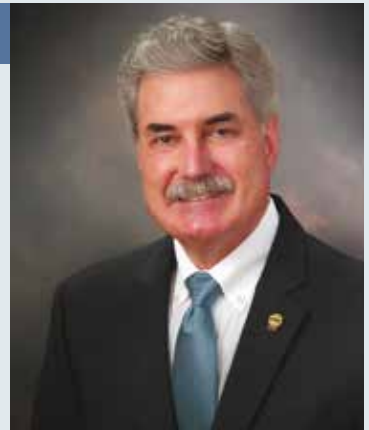
Each year, South River EMC sends three high school students to Washington, D.C., to represent the Cooperative. As part of the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour, these ambassadors join 1,500 students representing electric cooperatives from across the nation. The Electric Cooperative Youth Tour provides an opportunity for students to learn more about the cooperative business model, to meet our elected officials and to learn more about our nation's Capital.

Operation Round Up

Through the generosity of members who round up their monthly bill to the next dollar, Operation Round Up has helped our neighbors and community by contributing \$2.4 million to local non-profit organizations, emergency services and educational institutions in our area. We distributed \$215,392 to 39 agencies in 2020.

Economic Development

By partnering with local and state officials, we are doing our part to support job creation and encourage economic growth. Over the past two years, we have provided zero-interest loans to help increase business opportunities and provide greater safety to our communities. We provided a \$1 million loan to Liberty Point One LLC



to help with site preparation for a Class A industrial site in Cumberland County. Additionally, we provided a \$1 million loan to the Town of Spring Lake for the construction of a new fire station in the Manchester area of Cumberland County. Statewide, North Carolina's 26 electric cooperatives have contributed to projects resulting in \$1 billion in new capital investment and the creation of over 5,000 jobs.

Our electric co-op is led by members and belongs to the community it serves. Our local focus drives these and other efforts to support our community and deliver value to cooperative members. In this decade and beyond, we will continue our commitment to build a brighter local future by providing reliable electricity at the lowest possible cost, while also advancing the pursuit of responsible sustainability goals and meaningful investments in education, economic development and other community-focused activities. Learn more at sremc.com or follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

CREDITS Continued...

"Federal and state are our largest allotments, but also have very specific guidelines on what funds can be spent on. The Harnett County Schools CTE program is very fortunate to have a local CTE allotment. Many local education agencies across the state do not have this support," added Wilkinson.

The local funding source allows more flexibility in making purchases such as for permanent structures, or enhancements used to generate funding, which federal and state funds do not cover.

Teachers were able to apply for a grant in the amount of \$2,000, with applications limited to one request per teacher. However, Career Development Coordinators from each school could place requests on behalf of the entire school.

"We put an initial cap on each request. We are expanding several program areas across the county, so we might use a larger portion of the funding to aid in these efforts," said Wilkinson. "An example

of this would be helping fund a portion of a barn project to support an animal science program."

The grant application period ran up against the shutdown of schools for COVID, so there were fewer applications at the time than expected.

Another round of grant funding will be offered for CTE programs in the 2021-22 school year when instructors are back in the schools and making full use of labs and shops.

Projects funded thus far include agriculture, video production and editing, construction, biotechnology, career development, program marketing, and campus beautification. Requests ranged from classroom supplies that CTE funds that can't be used to purchase, to upgraded video and presentation equipment.

"So far we have over 500 students impacted by the grant offered from the school's capital credit refund," said Wilkinson. "We still have a few unfinished projects that are district and campus wide, so we are very excited to see these come to fruition."



Students earned the OSHA-10 Hour Healthcare Certification, thanks to a CTC grant.

Calling Vendors!

The bazaar is back at the 2021 Annual Meeting of Members. The meeting will be held on Thursday, October 14. Vendor spaces are free of charge and are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Vendors must be reputable, legitimate businesses that offer a valuable service to our members.

For more information, please contact Julie McLeod at 910.892.8071 or jwmcleod@sremc.com.

One such project is having concrete poured for Western Harnett High's greenhouse, which will bring it into American Disabilities Act, or ADA, compliance.

Another project is Harnett Central High's proposal, which allows student to compare gas powered and battery engines.

As a not-for-profit cooperative, South River EMC doesn't technically earn profits. Instead, any revenues over and above the cost of doing business, called margins, are returned to you.

This is done every year, and all Cooperative members are eligible, including residential, agricultural, commercial, and educational institution members. That's right, any of our members who use electricity receive capital credits.

South River EMC serves 18 schools across three counties and Harnett County students continue to be the beneficiaries of their county's annual capital credit rebates.

Fields of Honor

This Veterans Day, each South River EMC office will be adorned with a field of hundreds of flags to salute the contributions of those who have served in defense of this great nation. Flags will be on display from November 5-14.

If you want to recognize a special veteran, sponsorship opportunities will be available. Money raised will be donated to local veteran organizations. Please continue to watch our newsletter, website and social media channels for more information. We hope that you will find time to come by our offices during this week and experience our fields of honor!



Play It Cool

During summer months, run large appliances that emit heat, like dishwashers and clothes dryers, during the evening when it's cooler. This will minimize indoor heat during the day when outdoor temperatures are highest.



LONGER DAYS, BRIGHT IDEAS

Calling all public school educators, this is your chance to receive funding for your new school project.

Budgets provide basic materials, but what about that new manipulative kit you need to teach your students math, or the carpet on which you help your students learn about other countries or letters and words?

Bright Ideas grants can help you make those ideas reality. Since Bright Ideas can be written for any subject and any amount up to \$2,500, the options are endless.

The program awards grants to teachers in certified public K-12 schools, who have innovative, classroom-based ideas. Appli-

cations for professional development will not be considered.

South River EMC is currently accepting applications for Bright Ideas online at ncbrightideas.com.

Each year, South River EMC awards at least \$50,000 in grant funding to teachers in parts of Harnett, Johnston, Sampson and Cumberland counties.

While the application period opened April 1, few teachers have yet to submit their ideas. However, now is the time to start. Outline the idea, research and figure out the details.

If you apply by August 16, you are eligible to win a \$100 Visa gift card. But the final application deadline is September 15.

South River EMC only accepts applications online at ncbrightideas.com. If you're interested in learning more about this program, visit sremc.com/bright-ideas or e-mail sremc@sremc.com.

Since 1994, North Carolina's electric cooperatives have awarded \$13.6 million to fund over 13,000 projects affecting almost 2.7 million students.



Hot Water Savings For Summer

Hot water is essential to daily life, from washing hands to cleaning dishes to showering, but it quickly adds to electric costs. It should come as no surprise that water heaters account for nearly 17 percent of a home's energy use, consuming more energy than all other household appliances combined.

How do you fix that? Well it starts from purchasing and onward. When it comes time to replace your water heater, what are you thinking about? Timeliness and cost seem to be the lead factors. However, if you do your research now, you can be prepared to replace with an energy-efficient option.

For example, you probably have a standard electric water heater, a tank that heats your water periodically, so that you always have hot water whether you need it or

not. While not the most efficient system, it meets your needs. There are other options though, one is the heat pump water heater, or HPWH. Although they are approximately \$200 more than a standard electric water heater, they more than make up for that in their energy savings. By using the heat in their location, they must be in areas that remain in the 40 to 90-degree range year-round, they keep your water warm and are 2-3 times more efficient in doing so.

Also up for consideration is a solar water heater, but it takes a little more planning. A solar water heater typically needs an electric back up, but otherwise, no electricity to run. There are active and passive systems and open and closed loops. Do your research, because you want to make sure this system, which is roof mounted, is right for you.

Speak with several solar installers to ensure you are considering the appropriate size system for your home. You'll also want to make sure that a roof mounted system is approved for your area, some neighborhoods do not allow them. Then, there is the availability of solar power, your solar resource if you will, because without a good amount of solar power, you won't be able to heat all the water you need.

Both of these systems can save you energy, but you have to find a water heater system that is correct for you. You don't want a solar system if you only have a family of two and you don't receive enough solar resource, it's hardly worth the installation cost.

For complete details on both rebates, visit sremc.com/energy-efficient-water-heating, or call 910.892.8071 x 2153.

A promotional graphic for pool pumps. It features a young child wearing a white bucket hat and red sunglasses, floating in a blue pool with an orange life preserver. The text is overlaid on the image.

Swimming In Savings

Save up to **90%** on energy costs by switching to a two-speed or variable-speed pool pump!

Contact us at 910.892.8017 x 2153, or visit sremc.com/pool-pumps to find out more information about switching and if you could be eligible for a rebate on your new pump!

Heating And Cooling More Efficiently

Heating and cooling your home can get expensive. How expensive depends on a few items including the age of your system, the location of it, your thermostat setting, the unit's efficiency, and your habits.

Look at your system's age — most units can last up to 15 years, but just because they last, doesn't mean they're running as efficiently as they once were. While you should get your unit serviced twice a year, once before winter and once before summer, after about 10 years, consider a new system. That leads to your next consideration, efficiency.

The efficiency of your system is rated by the seasonal energy efficiency ratio, or SEER rating, which measures cooling efficiency. The higher the SEER rating, the more efficient the system cools, with high efficiency considered 17 SEER or greater. You also have to make sure that your system is the appropriate size for your home, too large uses more energy than necessary to cool your home, and with limited efficiency. Meanwhile, a system that is too small is underserving your home and works longer and harder to try to meet the demand. Because a higher efficiency SEER system is typically costlier, you'll want to make sure you save for the day when your current system needs replaced.

Where your unit is located also has an effect. Since it is directly exposed to the environment, it's vital to keep the unit well-protected from the sun and debris.

When your condenser is shaded, it's less likely to overheat, and will be able to dissipate heat better. Trees or shrubs nearby can block the sun's heat from warming the condenser. That holds true for your thermostat as well. A thermostat located near a heat source, like a lamp, or in direct sun, picks up the heat from directly around it and bases temperature readings on it. This affects how long your system runs and how often it is on or off.

What about your thermostat settings? This is something frequently discussed. In summer, it is recommended for your thermostat to be set at 78 degrees. When summer days heat up even a setting of 78 degrees can only save you so much. But setting it higher during hot periods, try over 75 degrees, and lower during cold periods, around 68 degrees, can help you save. It means your heating and cooling system comes

on less and could run less, but insulation and weatherization could play a part in that. More on that in the following paragraph.

Your habits also play a part in heating and cooling costs. How you set and adjust the thermostat, as well as how often your family adjusts the thermostat. Set it and forget it! Making improvements can help improve comfort and efficiency. If you're trying to keep your home cool this summer, make sure insulation is thick and covering the area it is supposed to, otherwise you're losing cool air. Meanwhile, weather stripping and caulking can also prevent cold air loss and hot air gain.

South River EMC offers rebates on the purchase of high efficiency heating and cooling systems. For details visit sremc.com/energy-star-heating-cooling or call 910.892.8071 x 2222.



Energy Star Used Right

Energy Star appliances are here to help you save. They undergo rigorous testing to ensure they meet energy efficiency standards, that's step one. Step two falls to you, going to the store, looking for a new washer or dryer, or refrigerator and finding the Energy Star certified device for you.

Once you bring it home, or it is delivered, you have to use it

right. If it's your washing machine, wash only full loads, and use cold water for washing whenever possible. If it's a clothes dryer, you might have selected an Energy Star unit with a moisture sensor, use it. As for a refrigerator, they are nine percent more efficient if Energy Star certified, so don't let ice gather in your freezer and don't stand there with the door wide open.

Energy Star certified systems can help you save, but only if you work with them. If you're considering purchasing one, remember that South River EMC offers a rebate on Energy Star certified refrigerators, clothes washer and dryers and dehumidifiers.

For details visit sremc.com/energy-star-appliances or call 910.892.8071 x 2153.

Searching Out The HERO Online

The High Efficiency Residential Option, also known as a HERO home, is an energy saver.

Now, if you go and search HERO home, you will come up with several different programs. One is a program for firefighters, EMS, law enforcement, military, healthcare, teachers, which helps save them on home purchases. Another is a program for home-schooled children and home-schooling parents in Minnesota. Yet another is teaching veterans how to use multifamily dwellings to provide for their family and others.

No doubt there are other HERO home options, perhaps some better than other, but if you search High Efficiency Residential Option, you'll find what

we're talking about. The best website to look at is energycodes.gov.

The HERO home is a home built with slightly better insulation, fenestration, air sealing, equipment, and lighting packages to deliver savings of some 30 percent over homes built to North Carolina's current building code.

There are two ways to do this:

The Performance Path, which is flexible, 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 that are less than or equal to that same home built to the

HERO Code's prescriptive requirements.

The Prescriptive Path is straightforward but inflexible, requiring 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.

A HERO home can help you save energy, and can also garner a rebate, whether you buy one new, build one, or have one custom built, as long as it is in South River EMC's service area. For details visit sremc.com/hero-program or call 910.892.8071 x 2153.

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