



# South River EMC Communicator

## SMALL CHANGE, BIG IMPACT

In 2007, many South River EMC members began allowing their electric bill to be rounded up to the next dollar monthly as part of Operation Round Up.

Those funds have gone to over 160 nonprofit organizations and schools since 2008, and have had a huge impact on our communities.



Lauren Strickland at Hargrove Elementary

Lauren Strickland is the media coordinator at Hargrove Elementary. She has received 12 grants for the school.

“Operation Round Up has funded thousands of dollars in much-needed books for Hargrove’s library. It is a constant battle to keep the library up to date with new and interesting books for students, and Operation Round Up has made this process 10 times easier,” said Strickland.

Nonprofit organizations like the Averagesboro Battlefield Commission, have used their multiple Operation Round Up grants to improve their facilities.

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South River EMC offices will be closed Monday, July 4, in celebration of Independence Day.

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## Member Satisfaction Is Our Priority

As a not-for-profit electric cooperative, our consumers are not customers, but members. That means that each person who has an account with South River EMC is a part-owner in our Cooperative. Therefore, we work for you! I like to say it is all about the member, and it is.

Because of this unique relationship, your satisfaction is always a top priority to our Cooperative.

We strive to provide excellent service with every job, action and transaction. We continually strive for improvement. In order to keep our finger on the pulse of your opinions, we engage the services of Cooperative Insights, a Raleigh-based national surveying company that specializes in providing tactically actionable market research and intelligence to cooperatives across the country. Cooperative Insights is part of North Carolina's Electric Cooperatives, our statewide trade association.

One of the hallmarks of our surveying efforts is the American Customer Satisfaction Index, or ACSI, score. This metric is used across many sectors of the business community to gauge overall satisfaction and engagement.

The ACSI is scored on a 100-point scale, where 100 is the best score possible. I am proud to say that South River EMC currently has an ACSI score of 89! This is the highest ACSI score South River EMC has achieved since we began surveying in 2010. It should be noted that South River EMC is included in a benchmark study along with 27 other cooperatives from several differ-

ent states. Of the 28 co-ops, 10 are from NC. South River EMC had the third-highest ACSI score among the group. Of the two that scored higher; one was from NC. The average ACSI score of the 28 electric cooperatives that participate is 86. To put this score into perspective, the average investor-owned utility earns an ACSI of 71 and the average municipal system ranks a 70.

All other scoring metrics are based on a 10-point scale with 10 being best. South River EMC members have rated us 9.11 in overall satisfaction. We scored highest in the areas of providing reliable energy (9.26), having competent and knowledgeable employees (9.19), being committed to the community (9.15) and being a name you can trust (9.06). The areas that we scored lowest are having a goal of lowest cost (8.55), providing a good value (8.67) and looking out for your best interest (8.77).

Many members made the following comments during a recent survey; "Keep up the good work"; "I have had service with South River EMC for over 40 years...every contact I have had with a lineman or office worker has been positive"; "Reliable service and fair prices"; and "Excellent service".

An achievement like this doesn't just happen on its own. First of all, I believe we are blessed. Second, it takes outstanding employees who are committed and empowered to provide excellent service. I commend our employees for providing excellent service to our member owners. I am very proud of them for the positive difference



MESSAGE FROM CEO  
CHRIS M. SPEARS

that they make in the lives of our members every day.

We not only provide overall satisfaction and engagement surveying quarterly, but we also participate in an annual front-porch forum, which is an online "focus group" of members. We also participate in the National Survey on the Cooperative Difference, which provides key insights about how members view their cooperative as well and gauge member opinions of current and emerging utility industry issues and technologies.

Our vision statement is: "Achieving Excellence, Empowering Members". We take this seriously and remember to put members first with every action and transaction. We hope that you will let us know when we meet your expectations as well as when we fall short. We are facing some challenging times with the economy and the transition of the energy market. We will face these challenges with you in mind because it truly is all about you, the member.

I am grateful for the opportunity to serve you as your CEO and if I can assist you in some way, please contact me at [CEO@sremc.com](mailto:CEO@sremc.com) or call at 919-230-2990.

*IMPACT continued from page A*

"We primarily work towards areas that will greatly enhance our properties, in both Harnett and Cumberland counties, to make them more appealing for history lovers to want to come and spend some time with us to learn more about the Battle of Aversboro," said Benny Pearce. "Our first grant enabled us to begin a planned program to start us on our way to improvements to make it more appealing to visitors."

Aversboro Battlefield Commission is the recipient of nine grants.

"Every time we receive a grant it is for the purchase of personal protection equipment/firefighting gear, or the gear the firefighter wears when going into a fire," said Scott MacKenzie, Eastover Volunteer Fire Department fire chief. "It is difficult to keep up the demands of replacing this equipment due to the significant cost and limited funding of our fire department."



**A family takes part in the Transitions Kids program**

Eastover Volunteer Fire Department has received eight grants over the past 14 years and they are on their second chief applying.

Another recipient of Operation Round Up is Transitions LifeCare.

Of the seven grants this organization received, one \$5,000 grant was used for the Indigent Care program, the rest was restricted to their Transitions Kids program.

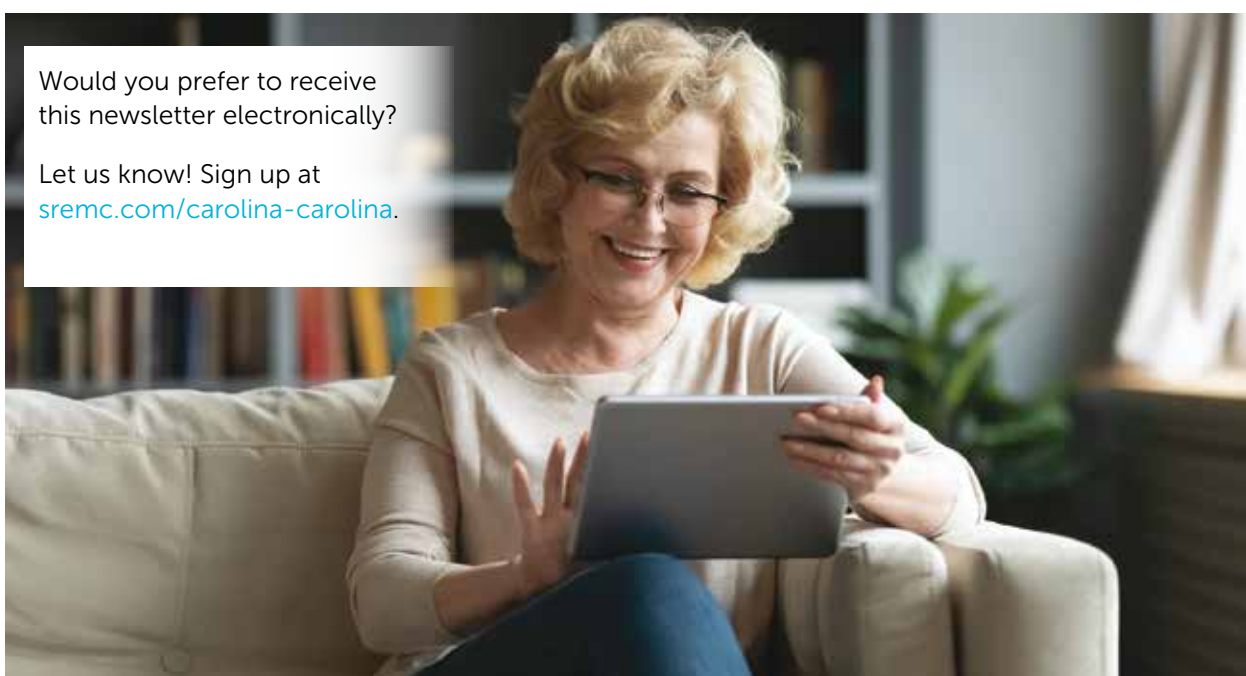
"In 2011, we received our first grant of \$5,000 to support patients who either did not have

insurance or were under insured. Approximately 8 percent of our patients fall in this category, and philanthropic support allows us to serve this population every year," said Christine Casey, vice president of philanthropy at Transitions LifeCare.

"In subsequent years, ORU has funded our Transitions Kids program, serving this vulnerable population of children and their families who are faced with life-threatening or end-of-life medical conditions. Only 5 percent of our program budget for Transitions Kids is reimbursed from Medicaid or private insurance, the remaining expenses are funded through philanthropic support."

Every month, when you participate in Operation Round Up, you contribute change, which adds up to change in your community.

Are you participating? Check your bill, or call us today!



Would you prefer to receive this newsletter electronically?

Let us know! Sign up at [sremc.com/carolina-carolina](http://sremc.com/carolina-carolina).

# MAKING A LIST FOR BRIGHT IDEAS

**D**uring the long summer day, bright ideas happen, and educators would do well to record them.

Begin by making a list. Then, flesh it out and when you have time, visit [ncbrightideas.com](http://ncbrightideas.com) and type it up.

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

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

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



Grant applications are not considered for professional development.

Since 1994, educators statewide have received \$11.5 million to fund 11,000 projects, affecting 2.2 million students.

Applications are now being accepted; educators with applications in by the early-bird

deadline of Aug. 15, are eligible to win a \$100 Visa gift card. The final application deadline is Sept. 19.

South River EMC accepts applications online only at [ncbrightideas.com](http://ncbrightideas.com).

Interested in learning more? Visit [sremc.com](http://sremc.com) or e-mail [connections@sremc.com](mailto:connections@sremc.com).

**South River EMC will once again host a Field of Honor at each office.**

**Approximately 400 10-foot American flags will be on display at each office on November 5-13 in honor of Veterans Day.**

**Opportunities will be available to sponsor a flag in honor or memory of a special veteran.**



# LINE CREW STABILIZES DRIVER AFTER WITNESSING HEAD-ON CRASH

By Victoria A. Rocha, NRECA staff writer

In the tight-knit communities served by electric cooperatives, there's often a perception that "everyone knows each other."

That was the case earlier this month in Fayetteville, when line crews from South River EMC helped stabilize a woman injured in a head-on collision with a pickup truck. That rescue team included the victim's brother-in-law.

Jennifer Lambert, 29, suffered multiple fractures in her arm and leg after her SUV was hit head-on by the driver of a Ford pickup truck attempting a left-hand turn at an intersection, according to the North Carolina State Highway Patrol.

Crews were working on repairs across the street when they witnessed the crash. They shut down the job, grabbed first-aid kits and rushed to the chaotic scene, where Lambert was trapped in her car, unconscious.

"Car horns were blaring, and we thought she was dead at first," said Tom Carter, crew foreman. "Her arm was bleeding heavily, and a bone was exposed."

During the flurry of activity, crew member Seth Lambert at first didn't recognize his sister-in-law. "But once things started slowing down, I realized it was her," he said. "It definitely felt more serious knowing the person, but I just wanted to let my brother know ASAP."

He called 911 and then his brother, Ashton, arrived just before emergency crews. In the meantime, the crew, which also included Derek Avery, Austin Britt and Kaleb Barnhill, made a tourniquet to stop the bleeding. Once the victim regained consciousness, they kept her still. They also cut the wire to silence the car horn.

Jennifer was airlifted twice to hospitals in Fayetteville and then Raleigh. The truck driver had minor injuries, according to the state highway patrol.

Despite the dramatic situation, the crew was well-prepared to help. South River EMC trains all employees in first aid and CPR/AED defibrillator use. In addi-

tion, lineworkers attend weekly safety meetings and review safety measures before each job.

A day after the crash, the co-op posted a message on its Facebook page from the victim's husband. "A genuine thank you to all the guys that jumped to action instead of standing around. What they did will never be forgotten."

Jennifer, who works as a 911 dispatcher, noticed the co-op crews working on the side of the road just before the accident. Little did she know that they would be her rescuers minutes later.



All in a days work: Tom Carter, Kaleb Barnhill, Austin Britt, Derek Avery and Seth Lambert

Knowing how you spend energy helps you use it more efficiently



## The Importance Of Efficiency

Home building and home buying can be two nerve-wracking phrases if you let them.

So you have to keep in mind what you are willing to settle for, and comfort should not be the first thing out the window.

Granted, color choices and counter tops are important to aesthetics, but are they going

to help you save energy every month?

No, but purchasing or building a high-efficiency residential option, or HERO, home can help you save, because these types of homes are built to be 30 percent more efficient than homes built to current code.

This is done in one of two ways,

by following detailed guidelines, or by providing a report, by a HERS rater, which states that your energy costs will be less than or equal to a home built to the specific.

South River EMC offers discounts, learn more at [sremc.com/hero-program](http://sremc.com/hero-program) or by calling 910.892.8071 x 2153.

## Don't Let Appliance Costs Add Up

There are many appliances that add to your electric costs each month. While your appliances account for a part of those costs, they do not account for a large part.

However, by replacing standard appliances, even previously purchased Energy Star certified appliances, with new Energy Star certified appliances, you could be saving some energy.

Energy Star certified clothes washers and dryers, refrigerators, and dehumidifiers are all eligible for a rebate from South River EMC.

Save even more energy by using them efficiently. Make sure you wash only full loads of laundry. When drying, Energy Star certified dryers often have a moisture sensor, so the appliance will stop running when there is no moisture left in the clothing.

Refrigerators, those are simple steps: don't stand with the door open, and don't set the temperature on the refrigerator or freezer too low. Lastly, don't run your dehumidifier when you don't need it, simple as that. Energy Star certified dehumidifiers use less energy when working.

For details on the rebate, visit [sremc.com/energy-star-appliances](http://sremc.com/energy-star-appliances) or call 910.892.8071 x 2153.

## Keep Cool During Hot Days

Long hot days, that's what you'll see for awhile, and they add up. Your heating and cooling system helps combat it, but there are a few reasons it might not be up to snuff.

**Age.** The older a heating and cooling system is, the less efficient it becomes, even if it was top of the line, with a high seasonal energy efficiency ratio, or

SEER, rating, and regular care.

**Size.** Your heating and cooling unit must be the right size for your home, if too big, it cycles on and off frequently, too small and it struggles to keep up.

Neither option makes for a long system life span.

**SEER rating.** The seasonal energy efficiency ratio rating is

meant to show the cooling efficiency of a system. The higher the SEER rating, the more efficient the system, particularly in high-heat days.

Beat the heat with a more efficient system. A 17 SEER or greater system might be eligible for a rebate. Visit [sremc.com/energy-star-heating-cooling](http://sremc.com/energy-star-heating-cooling) or call 910.892.8071 x 2222.

## Can You Cut Your Water Heating Costs?

You use hot water every day, so what happens when your water heater goes out?

In most cases, you replace with a similar unit, but is that helpful? Time wise, yes, you have little downtime and installation is relatively easy, but is it the most cost effective?

Maybe not. A standard electric water heater continuously warms water throughout the day, even if no one is home to use it, which means it is contin-

uously using electricity.

A solar water heater allows you to use a natural resource to warm water for use. Meanwhile, a heat pump water heater uses existing heat in a home to heat water. Both of these options can be more efficient.

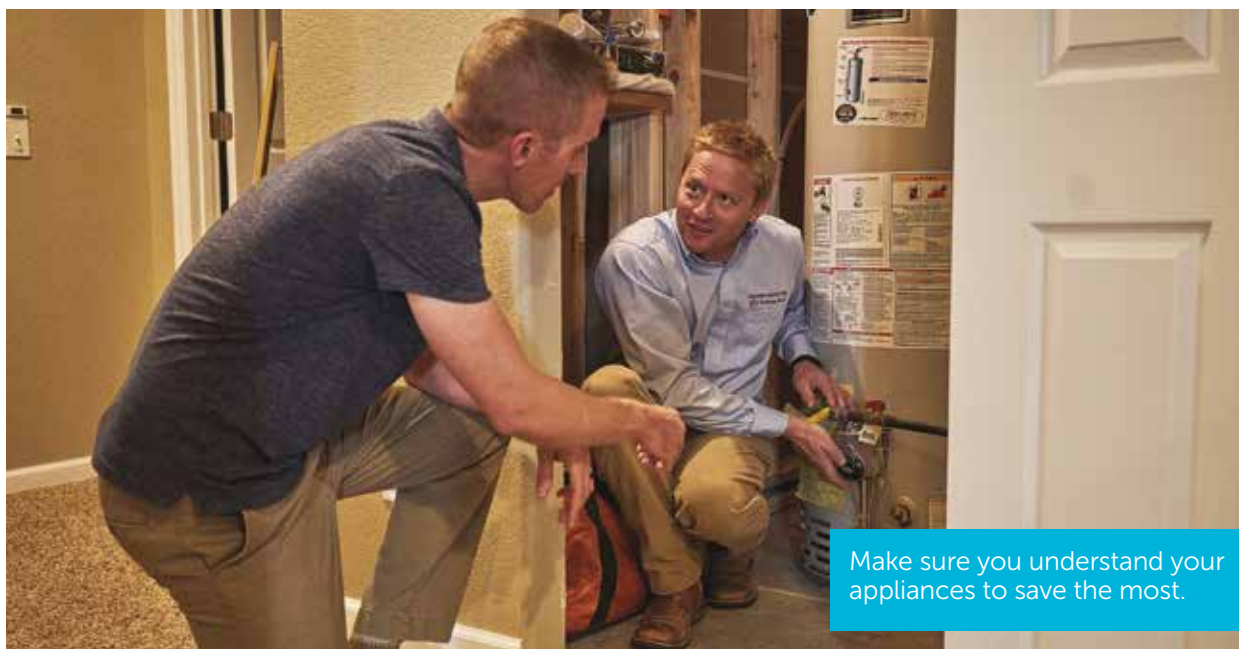
For solar water heaters you have to have a good solar resource, and the ability to mount a system on your roof.

For heat pump water heating,

you need a space that remains in the 40-90 degree range, as well as being 1,000 cubic feet.

If you're considering one of these systems, check out installers while your current water heater is still running.

South River EMC offers rebates on both solar and heat pump water heaters. For details visit [sremc.com/energy-efficient-water-heating](http://sremc.com/energy-efficient-water-heating) or by calling 910.892.8071 x 2153.



Make sure you understand your appliances to save the most.

## Improve Comfort With Improvements

Insulation and weatherization are key components in keeping your home cool this summer.

This is because insulation prevents heat transfer, or the entrance of heat into a cooler home during the summer, and the reverse in the winter.

With all the types of insulation available, you can feel one of two ways: overwhelmed or uninterested. But you should be curious, because a certain type of insulation might work better for some homes than others. Ask around what your neighbors and friends are using. The

R-value measures how well insulation can prevent the flow of heat into and out of the home. Higher R-value means greater insulation performance.

So, if you're feeling a little uncomfortable in your home, the temperature may be due to insufficient insulation. There is another option to look into as well, and that's weather stripping.

Weather stripping prevents air infiltration, or the loss of conditioned air outside and unconditioned air indoors. By installing caulking and weather stripping, you can also improve

comfort. You caulk non-moving pieces, like plumbing penetrations, and around base boards; meanwhile you weather strip around doors and windows.

These small steps, can help improve comfort and savings. They can also make you eligible for a rebate.

Small steps can add up to savings, and rebates. For details on insulation and weatherization rebates visit [sremc.com/insulation-weatherization](http://sremc.com/insulation-weatherization) or call 910.892.8071 x 2222.

## Why Pump Efficiency Should Matter

If you have a pool pump, running the pump efficiently might not cross your mind unless it makes a noise, or doesn't seem to be doing its job.

But there are a lot of ways to save when it comes to your pool pump, the first being size. The larger the pump, the greater your pumping and maintenance costs. Therefore, you want to use the smallest size pump possible for your swimming pool. So purchasing an appropriate size unit is foremost.

Then there's the type of pump you have, is it single-, variable-, or two-speed? The speed of

your pump is another contributing factor to electric costs. A single-speed pump uses one speed, often the highest, to do the work. A two-speed pump has two speeds to choose between, and a variable-speed has another option or two. The variability allows for you to match speed and water use to task.

Once you've found a pump that fits your pool, operation of it is next.

Pool pumps often run longer than necessary. Circulating your pool's water keeps chemicals mixed and removes debris. However, as long as the water circu-

lates while chemicals are added, they should remain mixed. It's not necessary to recirculate the water every day to remove debris, and most can be removed using a skimmer or vacuum.

Reduce filtration time too, try six hours per day. If the water doesn't appear clean, increase the time in half-hour increments until it does.

Start with the pump, and change some activity. After all, South River EMC offers rebates on variable or two-speed pool pumps. For details visit [sremc.com/pool-pumps](http://sremc.com/pool-pumps) or call 910.892.8071 x 2153.

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