

South River EMC Communicator

March 2025

Meeting Emergency Needs

Diapers are one of many costs associated with children.

And while not the most expensive, they can become a large chunk of any family's budget in the early years.

Residents in Sampson County have an option if their budget doesn't include all the necessary diapers, Life Line of Sampson.

"Our Executive Director, Celey Cumbo, worked as a volunteer with Life Line Pregnancy Center in Wilmington, for over 10 years," said Brandi Elkin, head of donor development and marketing. "She started out teaching classes at the center and eventually became more involved with client care for men and women facing pregnancy decisions."

A native of Clinton, Cumbo felt called to return and set up a pregnancy center in her home community, and it began as a partnership with the center in Wilmington in August 2019.

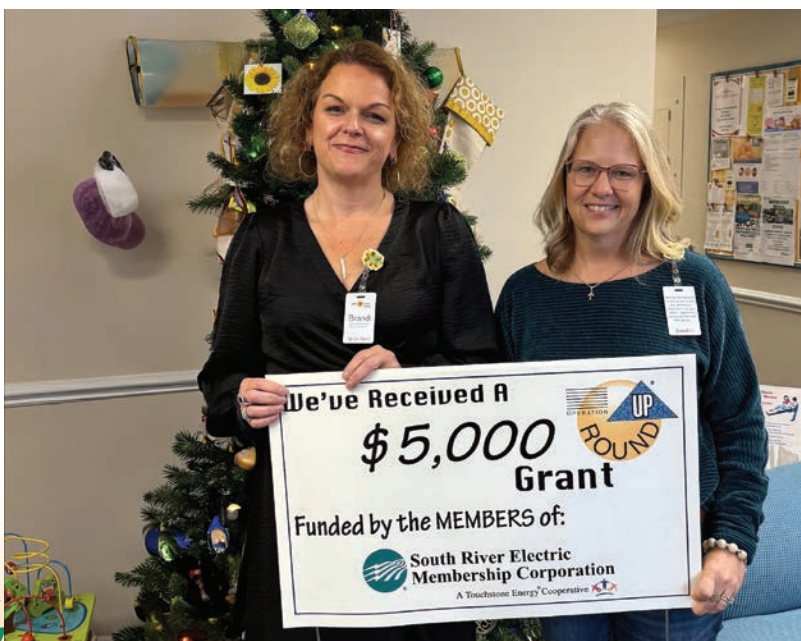
"We began in a mobile RV unit, and became independent in June 2020," said Elkin. "Diaper assistance has been part of our program since day one."

Now, on average, they serve between 65 and 70 families per month through their emergency needs program, and that's a lot of diapers

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March 9 marks the start of Daylight Saving Time. Make sure to spring your clocks forward.



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and wipes. They recently applied for and received an Operation Round Up grant for their emergency needs program.

"Up until we received the generous grant from South River EMC, our emergency needs (diaper) program, solely relied on donations from community members and local churches," said Elkin. "We are very blessed to have loyal and faithful donators that deliver diapers and wipes to our center regularly."

But, as you can imagine, even with generous donations the needs for such a program might not always be met, so Life Line of Sampson County decided to apply for the grant to bridge the gap between donations and the increased demand they were seeing.

"We are extremely grateful to receive this grant, it was truly an answer to prayers," she said. "We were facing challenges – running out of larger size diapers on a regular basis; we do advertise our needs through social media, but that is still no guarantee."

Elkin continued to explain that a lack of resources in rural areas like theirs make for a tremendous need for supplies like this, particularly as word has spread about the programs offered at Life Line of Sampson County.

"Life Line Sampson offers more than material assistance,



our mission is to offer life, love and support to men and women facing pregnancy decisions," said Elkin. "We offer pregnancy testing, limited ultrasounds, options education, an education program for parents, support groups, and community assistance referrals – all free of charge. Our clients also utilize our emergency needs program, which includes the diapers and wipes."

The center, located at 109 W Main St Suite A, Clinton. is open Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. and donations can be dropped off at any time during those hours.

They also accept donations of wipes, gently used baby clothes and baby toiletries.

"Word of mouth is our most effective method of sharing information," said Elkin. "Yes, our clients, who receive services, also participate in the emergency needs program, but being a client is not a requirement to participate in the program. It is open to

anyone in the community in need of diapers and wipes."

Interested in donating, but not in the area? They have shopping lists on Amazon and at Walmart and you can have the items shipped directly to the center.

Elkin expressed her appreciation to members participating in Operation Round Up saying, "Thank you for your incredible generosity! A few cents from each of you adds up and has a tremendous impact for organizations like Life Line Sampson.

"For us specifically, your pennies help us provide life, love and support to families in our community by providing diapers to families in need – families that are extremely grateful for this assistance. Your generosity is making a difference!"

Wish to learn more about services at Life Line Sampson? Visit lifelinesampson.com or call 910.828.2785.

Last Chance To Apply For Camp

Parents and students, your window is closing to apply for Touchstone Energy basketball camp.

South River EMC is offering a chance for current fifth and sixth graders to apply for the camps offered at NC State and UNC-Chapel Hill.

The camps give boys and girls a unique experience to attend basketball camp on one of two of the state's largest college campuses.

Students statewide are encouraged to apply for one of 50 all-expenses-paid scholarships to attend the Carolina Basketball Camp at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill June 25-28 and the Wolfpack Women's

Basketball Academy at North Carolina State University in Raleigh June 15-18.

The overnight camps are held in the summer, and campers work closely with coaches and players to develop fundamental skills, helping them perform and excel both on and off the court.

Campers must:

- ▶ Be a rising sixth or seventh grader. This means the student should currently be in fifth or sixth grade.
- ▶ Attend a school in the Cooperative service area.
- ▶ Have permission from a parent or guardian to attend. An information sheet must be signed.

- ▶ Provide their own transportation to and from camp.

Winners will attend the camps courtesy of South River EMC. The Cooperative funds one scholarship to each camp.

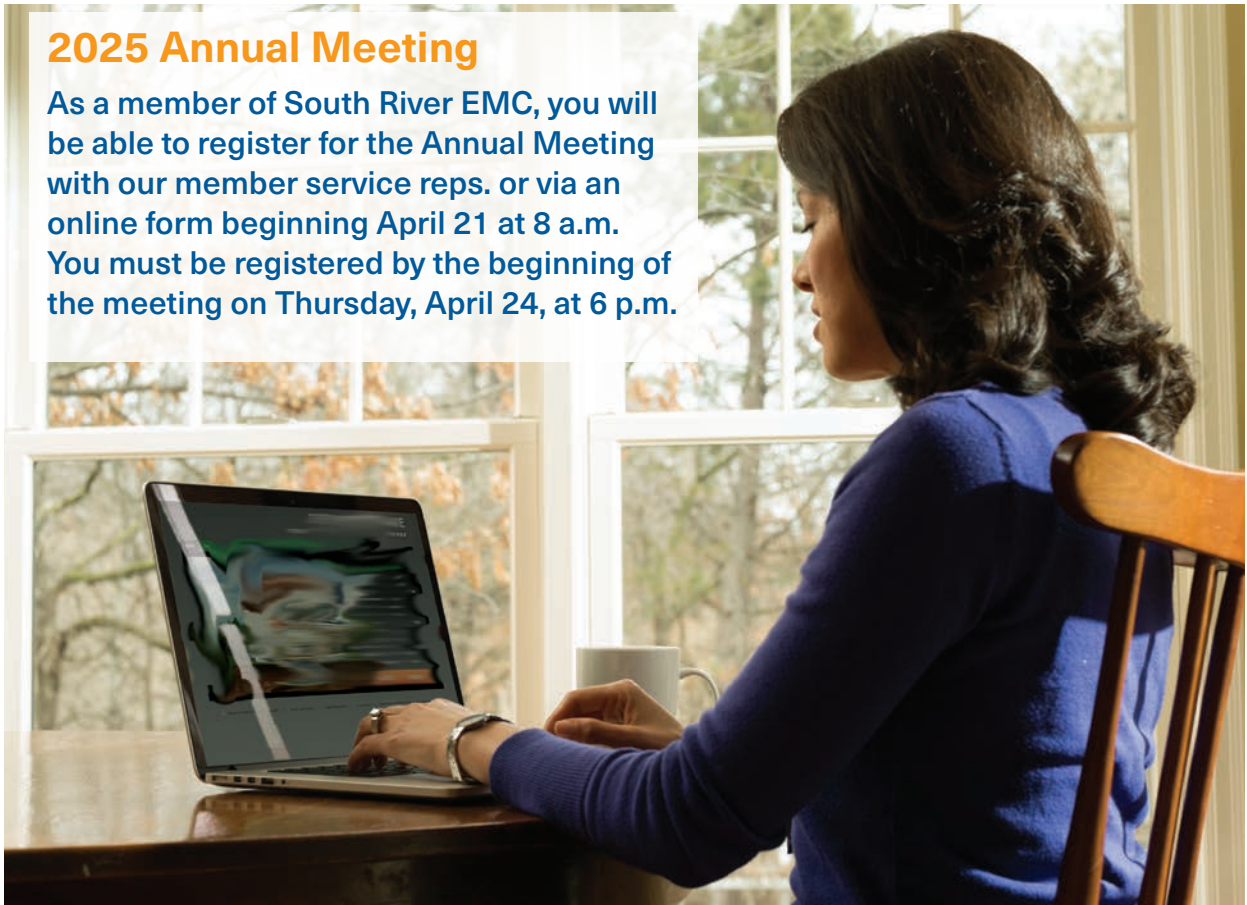
Applications are scored on academics, extracurricular activities and an essay that must accompany the application.



The application period runs from Jan. 2 to March 31. Eligible students interested in the scholarship can contact the Cooperative at 910.892.8071 or visit [sremc.com/basketball-camps](https://www.sremc.com/basketball-camps).

2025 Annual Meeting

As a member of South River EMC, you will be able to register for the Annual Meeting with our member service reps. or via an online form beginning April 21 at 8 a.m. You must be registered by the beginning of the meeting on Thursday, April 24, at 6 p.m.



Be Ready for Storm Season

Preparedness is the best defense

Spring is on our doorstep and like many of you, we're looking forward to more opportunities to be outdoors and enjoy warmer weather.

Springtime brings many of our favorite activities like cooking out with family and friends, working in the garden and simply slowing down a bit to enjoy life.

Unfortunately, spring and summer can also create the perfect conditions for severe storms.

South River EMC crews are always prepared and

standing by to respond should power outages occur in our area. When severe storms cause power disruptions, our line crews take all necessary precautions before they get to work on any downed lines.

We encourage you to practice safety and preparedness

to protect your family during storms and outages.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency recommends the items below as a starting point for storm and disaster preparedness, but you can visit [ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov) for additional resources.

- **Stock your pantry** with a three-day supply of non-perishable food, including canned goods, energy bars, peanut butter, powdered milk, instant coffee, water and other essentials.



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Staying In The Know

Communication styles might change and we retire old email addresses for new, maybe you decided to get rid of that landline.

Whatever the case, if there has been a change to any of the contact information you have provided to South River EMC in particular, we encourage you to let us know!

You can call and update information or complete the update information form on [sremc.com](https://www.sremc.com).

Why should you update your information? Because we want to keep you as informed as you want.

For example, if we are doing work in your area that may impact electric service, we attempt to notify you, even if it is just to leave a message. If we don't have a current number on file, you cannot be notified and therefore prepared.

Also, in the case of the Annual Meeting, your phone number or email address is used for contact to attend the annual meeting.

**STAY
IN THE
KNOW**

Stay connected by keeping your contact information up to date. Current contact information benefits you in multiple ways.

- ✓ Faster outage reporting and response
- ✓ Timely alerts about planned outages and other important updates
- ✓ Smoother customer service interactions

Ensure your phone number, email address and mailing address are up to date so you can enjoy the benefits of staying connected.

- **Confirm that you have** adequate sanitation and hygiene supplies including towelettes, soap and hand sanitizer.

- **Ensure your First Aid kit** is stocked with pain relievers, bandages and other medical essentials, and make sure prescriptions are current.

- **Set aside basic household** items you will need, including flashlights, batteries, a manual can opener and portable, battery-powered radio or TV.

- **Organize emergency** supplies so they are easily accessible in one location.

In the event of a prolonged power outage, turn off major appliances, TVs, computers and other sensitive electronics. This

will help avert damage from potential power surges and will also help prevent overloading circuits during power restoration. That said, do leave one light on so you will know when power is restored.

If you plan to use a portable generator, make sure it's rated to handle the amount of power you need, and always review manufacturer's instructions to operate it safely.

Listen to local news or a NOAA Weather Radio for storm and emergency information, and check our social media pages and web site for updates.

Severe storms can occasionally bring down power lines. If you see a downed line, always assume it's energized and never

approach it. If flooding occurs, never walk through areas where power lines could be submerged.

Advance planning for severe storms or other emergencies can reduce stress and anxiety caused by the weather event and lessen the impact of the storm's effects.

Sign up for NOAA emergency alerts and warnings and follow us for information. If you experience an outage, please **don't** report it on Facebook. Call 910.892.8071, report via your South River EMC app, or text #out to 888.338.5530.

We can never predict Mother Nature's plans. At South River EMC, we recommend that you make a plan today, because storm preparedness is always the best defense.

Congratulations To Those Students With A's!

Many students have been working hard to maintain their grades over the first semester.

South River EMC's "Give Us An A" program awarded 15 students for achieving at least one A in the recent grading period.

They must submit a copy of that report card with either their parent's or their, South River EMC account number, mailing address and daytime telephone number.

Congratulations to the following students:

Marlon Guerrier

Cumberland International Early College High School

Garrett Barefoot

Meadow School

Tamir McDougald

Alderman Road Elementary

Jaysin Coptsias

Mac Williams Middle

Annabelle Hall

Stedman Elementary

Landon Foley

Freedom Christian Academy

Claire Joyce

St. Ann Catholic School

Richardo Centeno-Trochez

Sampson Middle

Kaylen Sykes

Pine Forest High

Marcus Potts

Alderman Road Elementary

Abigail Ridgell

Cross Creek Early College

Perry Honeycutt

Midway Elementary



Michael Belprez

Northwood Temple Academy

Nevaeh Douglas

Pine Forest High

Amber Olson

East Carolina University

Drawings are held for Give Us An A in February and July, so check back for the next drawing.



The High Efficiency Home

The high efficiency residential option, or HERO, home is a home built 30 percent more efficient than homes built to code.

With slightly better insulation, fenestration, air sealing, equipment, and lighting packages to

deliver such savings, South River EMC offers several rebates.

There are two ways to receive HERO home certification, a straightforward, but inflexible approach, or a more flexible, but still pretty detailed approach.

To learn more about the HERO home option, visit energycodes.gov. To learn more about the rebates offered by South River EMC, visit sremc.com/hero-program.

It's Important To Have An Efficient HVAC System

We are in a time of changing temperatures, from freezing, to sunny and 75 degrees.

Because of that, it's a great time to get your heating and cooling unit serviced, or maybe even replaced.

By replacing your current heating and cooling system with a higher rated seasonal energy efficiency ratio, or SEER rating, you could save.

SEER measures the cooling efficiency of the unit, and the

higher the SEER, the more efficient the system.

If you're considering a new unit, check out South River EMC's rebates at sremc.com/energy-star-heating-cooling.

Perfect Time To Weatherize

It's the time for improvement, weatherizing and insulating can make a difference in the comfort of your home, as well as the cost of heating and cooling your home.

Now, not everyone is able to handle all the work of weatherizing a home, be it for budgetary or physical reasons. That's where

Community Action can help.

In having Community Action perform the weatherization package, you could make your home more comfortable, use a little less energy, and be eligible for a rebate.

With half of your energy costs going to heating and cooling the

weatherization package is for making single family or manufactured low-income homes comfortable.

For details on the rebate visit sremc.com/weatherization.

Is It Time For An Efficient Upgrade?

If you have a pool pump, it might be time to evaluate it. How old is the pump, and what type of pump is it?

If it is a single-speed pump, it might be time to replace it. Single-speed pumps have one setting, typically the highest, to perform all tasks. In most cases,

these higher settings are not appropriate for all tasks pumps are responsible for doing.

Too much water and too high a speed can make the pump inefficient and costs more to run overall.

When it comes to replacing, do so with a variable or two-speed

pump. With the ability to set specific water and energy use levels, they are much more efficient, as well as being eligible for a rebate.

For information on the rebate offered by South River EMC, visit sremc.com/pool-pumps.

Heating Your Water Efficiently

When selecting a new water heater for your home, choose a system that provides enough hot water for your family, but does so efficiently.

First is the conventional storage water heater, which offers a storage tank of hot water for everyday use. However, it heats that water throughout the day, at times when it may not be needed right away.

Tankless or demand-type water heaters heat water directly without the use of a storage tank. This type of water heater is great for gas water heating, but can be a high energy user for electric.

Heat pump water heaters move heat from one place to another instead of generating it directly for providing hot water, making it more efficient.

Solar water heaters use the sun's heat to provide hot water and also save money on energy bills.

There are many types and brands of water heaters, find the one that works best for your home.

For rebate information visit sremc.com/energy-efficient-water-heating.



Need To Replace Windows?

There are roughly 10 signs that your windows might need to be replaced.

Increased Energy Bills

Noticed a spike in your energy bills? If so, your windows could be part of the reason. Older or poorly insulated windows allow heat to escape in the winter and cool air to leak out in the summer, forcing your HVAC system to work harder, increasing energy costs.

Difficulty Opening and Closing

Windows should open and close with ease, so if you're struggling with windows that stick or refuse to open smoothly, this is a sign. Stiff or sticky windows often result from warped frames, balance issues, or even the accumulation of dirt and debris over time.

Noticeable Drafts

Feeling drafts around your windows, even with them tightly closed? This is a sign of seal failure, which leads to uneven indoor temperatures and discomfort in your home. Drafty windows compromise efficiency, making it harder to maintain a consistent temperature and can cause your HVAC system to wear out faster.

Condensation Between Panes

Condensation or fogging between windowpanes indicates a failed seal, allowing moisture to get trapped inside. This not only

reduces clarity but also impacts insulation, leading to higher energy costs. It may also signal that your windows are no longer effectively regulating temperature, causing drafts or cold spots in your home.

Visible Damage

Cracked glass, decaying window frames, and signs of warping are all major indicators that your windows are no longer in good condition. It is crucial to notice any damage to frames or glass promptly, as even small cracks can lead to increased energy costs, reduced insulation, and further deterioration if unaddressed.

Excessive Outside Noise

Are you hearing more noise from outside than usual? This could be a sign that your windows aren't providing sufficient insulation. Windows are designed to block external noise, but over time, their soundproofing capabilities can diminish. Poor-quality or aging windows may allow traffic sounds, or other outdoor noise to seep inside.

Water Leaks During Rain

Water leaking through your windows during rainstorms is a clear sign that they no longer properly seal. This can lead to water damage, mold, and even structural issues inside your home. Moisture seeping in from poor window

seals can cause long-term problems that are costly to repair.

Faded Furniture and Floors

Noticed that your furniture or floors are fading? It could be due to UV rays penetrating your windows. Older windows often lack adequate UV protection, allowing harmful rays to damage the interior of your home over time. This can result in faded upholstery, carpets, and even hardwood floors.

Outdated Appearance

Windows play a crucial role in the overall look of your home. If your windows are old, worn, or simply outdated, they can detract from your home's curb appeal. Replacing them with modern replacement windows is an excellent way to elevate your home's aesthetic and add value.

Single-Pane Windows

If your home has single-pane windows, it's time to upgrade. Single-pane windows are far less efficient than double-pane options, which are designed to provide better insulation and reduce energy consumption.

If you find some of these problems with some of your windows, remember South River EMC offers a \$200 rebate on window replacements. For details visit sremc.com/energy-star-windows.



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Communicator

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 Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives
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