

South River EMC Communicator

June 2025

How Temperatures Impact Cost

When outdoor temperatures soar, electricity use increases.

That's largely because air conditioners run longer and more often to counteract sweltering outdoor temperatures.

At South River EMC, we work closely with North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation, our local generation and transmission (G&T) cooperative in resource and infrastructure planning to ensure you have the power you need whenever you flip a switch, but that electricity comes at a cost, particularly because people across of the country are simultaneously using electricity.

To help keep the air conditioner running for you, your family and neighbors, here are a few things you can do to lessen costs during the upcoming hot summer days:

- Select the highest comfortable thermostat setting and turn it up several degrees whenever possible. Your cooling system must run longer to make up the difference between the thermostat setting and the outdoor temp, which means more cost.

- **Pro tip:** Seal air leaks around windows and exterior doors with caulk and weatherstripping. Air leaks and drafts force your cooling system to work harder than necessary.

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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.

Changes To How You Chat

South River EMC has recently made some changes to the chat function on our web site.

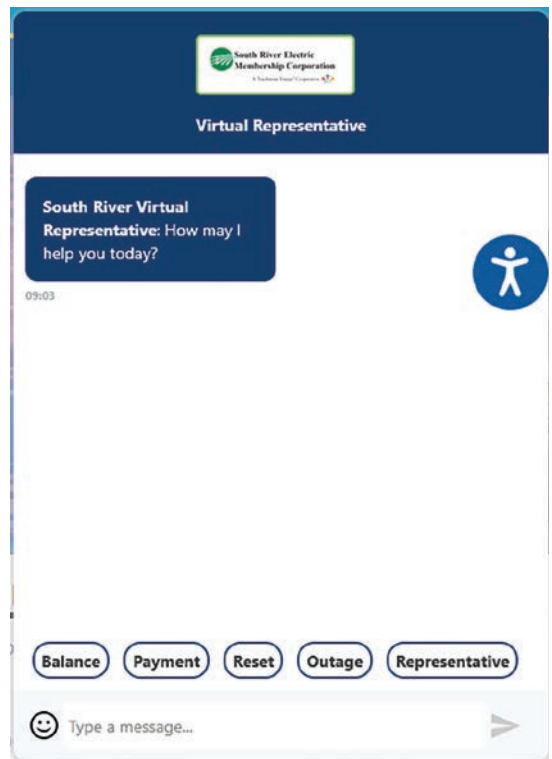
The chat is still located in the bottom right corner of our web site; click on the little circle, seen below left, to activate the chat function.



Upon opening, you will be given options, as well as a text box. Using the chat, you can obtain your account balance, make a payment using a card on file, report an outage, or request help from a representative during business hours.

You will be required to submit some information in order to verify your account for these tasks.

The chat is just another way for South River EMC to help you.



RELIABILITY cont. from page A

- Run major appliances such as dishwashers, ovens and dryers during off-peak hours when the demand for electricity is lower.

- o **Pro tip:** Start the dishwasher before you go to bed.

- Use ceiling fans to make yourself feel a few degrees cooler. Remember, ceiling fans cool people (not rooms), so turn them off in unoccupied rooms.



- o **Pro tip:** During summer months, set ceiling fan blades to rotate counterclockwise, which pushes cool air down for a windchill effect.

- Close blinds, curtains and shades during the hottest part of the day to block unwanted heat gain from sunlight.

- o **Pro tip:** Consider blackout curtains with thermal backing or reflective lining to block heat and light.

- Use smaller appliances, such as slow cookers, air fryers and toaster ovens, to cook meals.

- o **Pro tip:** Studies have shown that air fryers use about half the amount of electricity than a full-sized oven. Air fryers are smaller and use focused heat, which results in faster cooking times, less heat output and lower energy use.

As we face the challenges posed by soaring summer temperatures, understanding the impact on energy demand and cost is crucial for maintaining a reliable power supply.

By adopting energy conservation practices during periods of extreme heat, not only can you save money on your electric bills, but you can also contribute to the resilience of the grid, keeping our local community cool and connected.

For more energy-saving tips, visit [sremc.com/advise-guys](https://www.sremc.com/advise-guys).

Send Us Those Report Cards!

As schools wrap up another year, it's time to submit those report cards.

The report card, if containing at least one A, could make the student eligible for the "Give Us An A" program.

"Give Us An A" recognizes students receiving at least one A on their most recent report card.

Make a copy of the report card and send it to:

South River EMC
Give Us An A
PO Box 931
Dunn, NC 28335

Or email it to: connections@sremc.com

Report cards must include the member's name, address, South



River EMC account number and daytime telephone number.

Report cards will not be accepted without this information.

The drawing will be for 15 names to each receive a \$25 gift card.

This program is open to students who are members, or children of members, of South River EMC.

Don't miss an opportunity to celebrate good grades. Report cards should be submitted by July 7.

Use Hot Days To Submit Bright Ideas

Hot days are here and hopefully they are inspiring some cool ideas.

Teachers, you might just be starting to relax, but ideas keep coming and planning never stops!

The 2025-26 Bright Ideas application period is open until September, so if you have an idea to help your students learn and need equipment, let us know!

Maybe there is a new idea or items to help students better understand concepts, but if it seems like those items aren't in the budget, a Bright Ideas grant could be the answer.

The Bright Ideas program awards grants to teachers in certified, public K-12 schools,

who have innovative, classroom-based ideas.

Project ideas can be from anywhere, in any subject and amount up to \$2,500.

Each year, South River EMC awards at least \$50,000 in grants to teachers in parts of Harnett, Johnston, Sampson and Cumberland counties and has funded \$1.7 million in projects locally.

Since 1994, NC educators statewide have received \$16.5 million to fund over 15,400 projects affecting nearly 4 million students.

Applications for professional development will not be considered.

The final application deadline is Sept. 15, but educators with

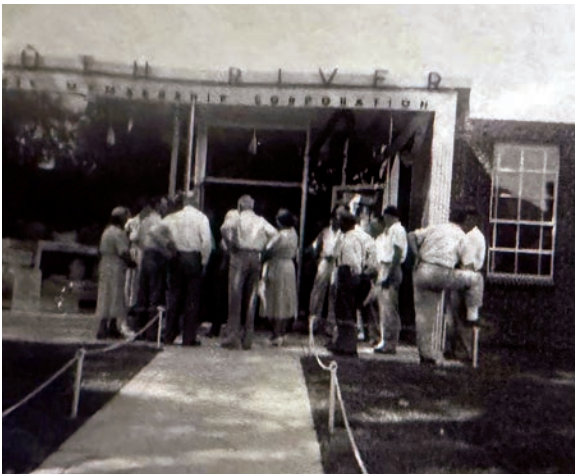


applications submitted by Aug. 15, will be entered in a drawing to win a \$100 Visa gift card.

South River EMC only accepts applications online at ncbrightideas.com.

If you're interested in learning more about Bright Ideas, visit sremc.com/bright-ideas or e-mail connections@sremc.com.

South River EMC Celebrates 85 Years Of Service



Connect Your Thermostat And Save?



If you have a smart thermostat and are looking for ways to save, we might just have a way.

Members who enroll their smart thermostat(s) in our 'Connect Your Thermostat' program can earn \$50 upfront and \$50 every year for your participation.

The program enables minor adjustments to thermostat settings when the demand for electricity peaks, but don't worry — you'll always remain in control of your settings.

Learn more at ConnectToSaveNC.com/SREMC.

Tips to Reduce Wildfire Risks

Wildfires are no longer confined to the western United States. Traditionally associated with dry, fire-prone regions like California, wildfires are now affecting areas in the Midwest and even parts of the Southeast.

This shift is driven by rising temperatures, prolonged droughts and changing weather patterns, which are creating conditions ripe for fires in regions that historically saw fewer of them.

As a result, more communities are now facing growing threats from wildfires, prompting a need for broader awareness and preparedness nationwide.

South River EMC works to reduce the risk of fires throughout our service territory. Through regular vegetation management, be it spraying or trimming, and grid maintenance and hardening practices, we are proactively working to reduce risks and improve the reliability of our local system.

As a member of South River EMC, there are steps you can take to prevent fires.



1. Don't burn on windy days. Avoid outdoor burning when it's windy or dry, as embers can easily spread and ignite surrounding areas.
2. Clear vegetation and debris. Maintain a defensible space around your home by removing dry leaves, dead branches and other flammable materials.
3. Use equipment safely. Tools like lawnmowers or chainsaws can spark fires. Use them during

cooler times of the day and keep them in good working condition.

4. Follow local fire regulations. Always check for burn bans or restrictions in your area before burning anything or using open flames outdoors.

5. Properly extinguish campfires. Always douse your campfire with water, stir the ashes and ensure everything is cool to the touch before leaving the area.



The High Efficiency Home Option

The High Efficiency Residential Option, or HERO, home is built 30 percent more efficient than a home built to code.

The HERO alternative requires slightly better insulation, fenestration, air sealing, equipment, and

lighting packages.

HERO certification can be accomplished in one of two ways via the prescriptive path or the performance path.

Information on those can be found at energycodes.gov.

South River EMC offers rebates for members and builders who build this alternative.

Learn more at sremc.com/hero-program.

Save With An Efficient Pool Pump

If you have a pool, a new pump might be the way to save energy.

Replace a single-speed pump (one speed for everything) with a variable- or two-speed pump, to help with energy and water use.

Pool pumps are large energy users when active, so selecting a pump where you can tailor settings to task, as well as adopting efficient practices could help save.

If you replace a single-speed pump with a variable or two-speed pump, you could be eligible for a rebate.

For details visit sremc.com/pool-pumps.

Use Less Energy To Heat Your Water

Water heaters are the second highest energy user in a home.

This has a lot to do with the type of water heater, often a standard storage water heater.

There are more efficient options, like solar or heat pump water heaters.

Each system has its pros and cons and only you can decide which will work best.

Solar water heaters use the sun to heat your water, so you need a good solar resource.

Heat pump water heaters pull heat from surrounding areas and

use it to heat the water. Because they move heat, rather than make it, they're about 2-3 times more efficient.

For details on water heater rebates offered by South River EMC, visit sremc.com/energy-efficient-water-heating.

Save On Heating And Cooling

Replacing your heating and cooling system is an eventuality.

By knowing what you want in your next unit, and budgeting for it, you can be better informed and prepared.

Efficiency is measured by the seasonal energy efficiency ratio 2, or SEER2, rating. The higher the SEER2 rating the more efficient a system is at cooling.

South River EMC offers

rebates on efficient heat pumps, 16 SEER2 or greater. For details visit sremc.com/energy-star-heating-cooling.

Don't Lose The View

Windows allow us to see so much while also protecting us.

But like all things, they don't last forever, and you have to be prepared when they need replaced.

Unless there is a break, there will be signs and you can begin the process of replacement.

If you have windows that are leaky, or their frames aren't quiet

up to snuff, you might be able to replace them and receive a rebate from South River EMC.

For details visit sremc.com/energy-star-windows.

Keeping Your Home Tight

Heat and humidity, you want both out of your house, and by weatherizing and insulating your home, you can keep them out.

Insulation prevents heat transfer, or the movement of heat to a cooler space, namely, your home. Caulking and weather stripping prevent air infiltration, or air moving from outside to inside and

vice versa. Both can make a home uncomfortable.

Community Action has a weatherization package, and if it is completed at your home you could be eligible for a rebate. In order to qualify for the rebate the entire package must be completed.

The weatherization package for single family or manufactured

low-income homes includes: air/duct sealing, improved insulation, an HVAC tune-up or replacement, and a programmable thermostat in a home with a heat pump or an electric furnace/ central AC.

For details visit sremc.com/weatherization



Message from Advise Guy Eric Gainey



Keep Cool and Save Energy This Summer

As the hot and humid weather starts rolling in, keeping your home comfortable without sending your electric bill through the roof becomes a top priority.

At South River EMC, we're here to help you stay cool while using energy wisely. Here are some simple, effective ways to save energy (and money!) during the summer months:

Set it and Save

If you have a heat pump, thermostat settings matter. The U.S. Department of Energy recommends setting your thermostat to 78°F when you're home and using air conditioning. That's the sweet spot between comfort and efficiency. Be sure your FAN setting is on AUTO—not ON—so it's not running nonstop and wasting energy.

If you have more than one HVAC unit, make sure both are set to the same temperature and mode (cooling vs. heating). This helps them work together instead of against each other. If one system is cooling while the other is set slightly warmer or even on a different mode (like "auto heat/cool"), it can create an energy tug-of-war—leading to inefficient

cycling, higher energy use, and less comfort.

And if you're heading out for vacation, bump the thermostat temp up a few degrees—around 82–85°F should be safe and energy-efficient while you're away. That way, your system isn't working hard to cool an empty house.

Keep Vents and Doors Open

Air needs to move freely to cool your home efficiently. Make sure supply vents are open in every room, and keep interior doors open or at least slightly cracked. This allows return air to circulate properly and prevents pressure imbalances that can reduce comfort and increase energy use.

Seal It Up Tight

Cool air slipping out of your house and hot air sneaking in makes your AC work overtime. Seal any gaps or cracks around windows, doors, and ducts. Caulking, weather-stripping, or adding insulation—especially around crawl spaces, attics, and garages—can make a big difference.

Be Smart with Sunlight

Close blinds or curtains during the sunniest parts of the day. Blocking out direct sunlight can keep your home noticeably cooler.

Keep It Flowing

Change your HVAC filters regularly—every 30 days. Stick with thinner filters unless your system specifically calls for a thicker one. Thick filters can restrict airflow and strain your system.

Fans Are Your Friend

Ceiling or box fans help circulate cool air. Just remember: fans cool people, not rooms. Turn them off when you leave to save electricity.

Get a System Checkup

Don't skip the summer service visit. Having your HVAC system professionally inspected and tuned up ensures it's running efficiently and can prevent costly breakdowns when you need cool air the most.

Energy savings don't have to come at the expense of comfort. A few small adjustments can go a long way toward lowering your bill and keeping your home comfortable all summer long.

For more information on ways to save visit sremc.com/advise-guys or send a message at adviseguys@sremc.com.



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