



# South River EMC Communicator

## DON'T WAIT

### Be Prepared Before the Storm

**A**s we make our way through hurricane season, we hope that every approaching storm will run out of steam, or that it will make a turn back out to sea. If that doesn't happen, we must prepare.

While you can't guess if weather forecasts will come true, you can plan ahead so when a severe weather event strikes, you have the tools and resources to effectively weather the storm. The Department of Homeland Security offers several resources to help you prepare for major weather events and natural disasters. Begin by visiting [ready.gov/make-a-plan](https://www.ready.gov/make-a-plan).



#### Preparedness Actions and Items

- Stock your pantry with at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food, such as canned goods, energy bars, peanut butter, powdered milk, instant coffee, water and other essentials (i.e., diapers and toiletries).

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South River EMC offices will be closed Monday, September 2, in recognition of Labor Day.

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- 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 your prescriptions are current and you have an appropriate supply.
- 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 together in an easily accessible location.

### **With Advance Warning**

If a severe storm such as a hurricane is expected with high winds and sustained rain, you may need to take extra steps to safeguard your home. Shutter windows and securely close exterior doors. Fully charge all cell phones, laptops and devices so you have maximum power in the event of a power outage. If you plan to use a generator, make sure it's rated to handle the amount of power you will need, and always review the manufacturer's instructions to operate it safely.

### **During A Prolonged Outage**

In the event of an outage, turn off appliances, TVs, computers and other sensitive electronics. This will help avert damage from a power surge, and also helps prevent overloading the circuits during power restoration. That



said, leave one light on outside and inside so you and crews will know when power is restored. If using a small household generator, consider using LED holiday lights to illuminate a living area. A strand of 100 white lights draws little energy yet produces considerable light. Solar lights also work, if they can receive some sunlight during the day for charging.

During thunderstorms, the American Red Cross recommends avoiding electrical equipment and land-based telephones. Use battery-powered TVs and radios instead. Keep away from windows. Listen to local news or NOAA Weather Radio for emergency updates, and check South River EMC's website, Facebook or Twitter pages, for restoration updates.

After the storm, avoid downed power lines and walking through flooded areas where power lines could be submerged. Allow ample room for utility crews to safely perform their jobs – including on your property.

Never interrupt a working crew for updates. The crew is tasked with restoring power and likely doesn't have a whole picture as to when power will be restored. They will continue working as long as it's safe and until all members have power restored.

### **Power In Planning**

Advance planning for severe storms or other emergencies can reduce stress and anxiety caused by the weather event and can lessen the impact of the storm's effects. Sign up for NOAA emergency alerts and warnings, and South River EMC outage texting, in order to report your outage as well as receiving status updates. To sign up, you will need your South River EMC account number. Text SREMCTEXT to 888.338.5530 to begin the sign-up process. The cell phone used for sign-up must be associated with the account before sign-up can occur.

Act today, because there is power in planning.

# WHO'S RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS?

South River EMC employees field a lot of questions regarding where the utility's responsibility ends and where the homeowner's obligation begins in homes.

In a nutshell, South River EMC is responsible for all of the poles, lines and transformers that lead from our system to your meter. If your service comes from the pole to the home overhead, then the Cooperative is responsible for the wire extended to the home, but the member is responsible for the wire from the weather head to the meter (see diagram). If your service to the home from the pole is underground, South River EMC is responsible for the underground wire up to the top of the meter. The meter is also the responsibility of the Cooperative.

However, that is where things change. The meter base, which

holds the meter is installed and owned by the member. Everything inside the home (electric wiring, plumbing and gas lines are member owned).

If you have a workshop or water pump on your property that has electricity, but it is all connected through a single meter on the home, the electric conduit running from the meter to these facilities is the responsibility of the homeowner.

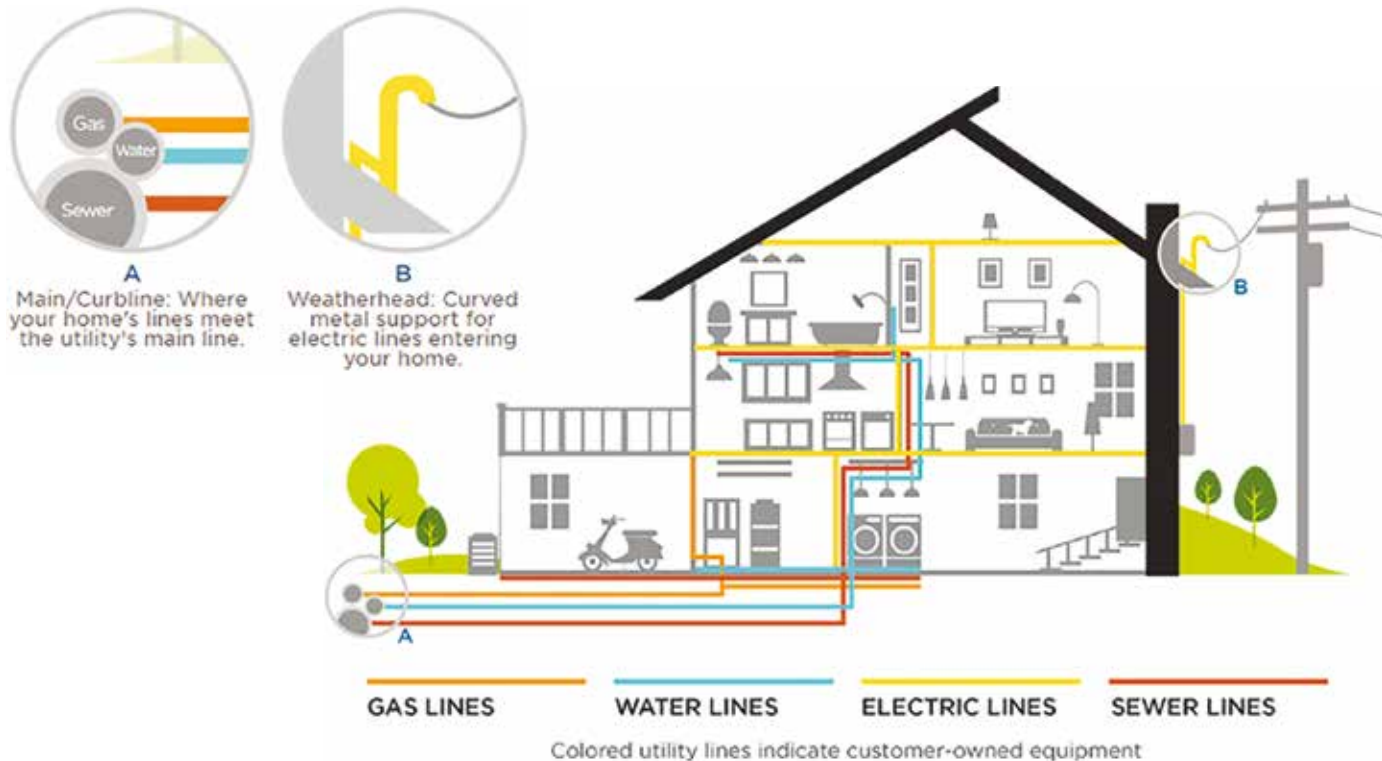
If a storm comes through and knocks down the power lines running to your meter from our pole, call South River EMC and we will make repairs immediately.

If the underground line from your meter to your workshop fails, call an electrician.

In the past, members have received information from IGS Energy for a product called Utility Shield.

We partnered with this company to offer a voluntary program to members who might want to purchase a protection package to help alleviate the high cost of unexpected failures of home wiring, plumbing, sewer lines, gas lines or HVAC and water heating. This program allows you to purchase different levels of protection and helps pay repair costs resulting from normal wear and tear. There is also a package that will help pay for the cost of appliances damaged from an external surge such as lightning.

If you are interested in learning more, please visit [utilityshield.com/southernriveremc](http://utilityshield.com/southernriveremc) or call 888.974.0112. This product isn't sold by South River EMC so all questions and sales must be directed to IGS Energy.



## 3-Step HVAC Test

As summer temperatures rise, so do electric bills. Follow these steps to test the efficiency of your HVAC unit.

The outdoor temperature should be above 80 degrees, but less than 95 degrees, and you should set your thermostat well below the room temperature to ensure the system runs long enough for this test.

1. Using a digital probe thermometer (about \$12), measure the temperature of the air being pulled into your HVAC filter.
2. Measure the temperature of the air blowing out of your A/C vent.
3. Subtract the A/C vent temperature from the HVAC filter temperature. You should see a difference of about 17 to 20 degrees. If the difference is less than 17 degrees, you may need a licensed technician to check the coolant.



## YOUTH TOURISTS TALK WASHINGTON, D.C.

This summer, South River EMC sent three local high school juniors on a week long trip of exciting possibility.

This trip, the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour, gathers students from electric cooperatives across the state to experience Washington, D.C.

Students visit monuments and museums, meet their senators and representatives, as well as meeting cooperative youth from across the country.

"I met people from nearly every state in the U.S.," said Jordan Wallum, a South River EMC youth tourist, "including Hawaii."

In 2019, South River EMC sent Jordan Wallum from Midway High; Jordan Burns from Gray's



Creek High and Lizzie Phipps from Hobpton High.

"The best part about the trip was bonding and becoming friends with all of the other representatives from North Carolina co-ops," said Phipps. "The friendships I made on this trip I truly believe will last a lifetime."

Students learn a lot about history, the government today, and even each other.

"Coming from a very rural area, I expected delegates from NC to

all be very similar. To my surprise, each of us were very different," said Wallum. "It was really cool to see everyone's ideas and beliefs integrated throughout our time in Washington, D.C."

By the time the bus unloads at the end of the week, these students are sad to see each other go. There have been new, and at times, interesting experiences happening all week.

"Nothing unexpected happened," said Phipps. "But while touring, I know all the other tourists in Washington, D.C., didn't expect a group of 45 kids to start screaming the lyrics to "Sweet Caroline" while walking around."

The time to apply will be here soon, so visit [sremc.com/content/electric-cooperative-youth-tour](http://sremc.com/content/electric-cooperative-youth-tour) to learn more.

# LAST CALL FOR BRIGHT IDEAS

**T**here's still time to get your Bright Ideas grant applications submitted, but don't delay!

Bright Ideas is an educational grant program for certified K-12 public school teachers with innovative, classroom-based ideas.

Grants can be for any subject and any amount up to \$2,500. However, applications for professional development will not be considered.

South River EMC expects to fund at least \$50,000 in educational grants to our local schools.

Applications are accepted online at [ncbrightideas.com](http://ncbrightideas.com).

North Carolina's electric cooperatives, including South River EMC, are responsible for awarding more than \$12.2 million in Bright Ideas grant funding, and 2.2 million N.C. students have participated in approximately 11,699 Bright Ideas projects.

So, don't miss out on a chance to add to your lessons this year. If you have an idea to help your students learn, write it out and submit it for consideration.

Be sure to proofread your writing and ensure you provide the clearest information possible.

To apply, or for more information about the Bright Ideas grant program, visit [ncbrightideas.com](http://ncbrightideas.com), call 910.892.8071, or e-mail [connections@sremc.com](mailto:connections@sremc.com).



# GIVE US AN A RECIPIENTS DRAWN

**T**he following 15 students received at least one A on his or her most recent report card and submitted it for the "Give Us An A" drawing. Each student selected receives a \$25 gift card.

**Kevin Acuna**  
Gray's Creek Elementary

**Seth McLamb**  
Western Harnett Middle

**Madelyn Slade**  
Gray's Creek High

**Sara Honeycutt**  
Midway Middle

**Ashley Davis**  
Mac Williams Middle

**Danea Summerford**  
Overhills High

**Yasmin Randolph**  
Western Harnett Middle

**Kaitlynn Davis**  
Cape Fear High

**Sarah Burchett**  
Cape Fear High

**Luis Acuna**  
Gray's Creek Elementary

**Garrett Bullard**  
The Fayetteville Academy

**Kaegan Young**  
Gray's Creek High

**Caroline Matthews**  
Mintz Christian Academy

**Adyson Honeycutt**  
Midway Elementary

**Rebecca Slade**  
Gray's Creek Middle

Congratulations to our lucky students! Share your



excitement with us at [connections@sremc.com](mailto:connections@sremc.com).

Start the next school year off right, we will have another drawing for those students who receive A's in February. Look for the due date in future newsletters!



Save money before you close the pool for the season, purchase a more efficient pump.

## Savings Before The Pool Closes

Whether you've closed your pool or not, be on the lookout.

The lookout for what? An efficient pool pump deal. Purchasing a variable or two speed pool

pump can help you cut savings when pool season rolls back around. Getting a pump at the close of the season might net you some savings as well.

Think about it, and if you decide to go for it, read about the rebate offered by South River EMC. Details can be found at [sremc.com](http://sremc.com) or by calling 910.892.8071 x 2152.

## Heating And Cooling Decisions Made Easier

As we enter the back to school season, and temperatures begin their fluctuation, it's time to get your heating and cooling system serviced.

After the summer heat and before the winter cold blows in is the perfect time to service your system.

It's time to make sure everything is running appropriately, and if not, get it fixed or even replace the system if necessary.

Common belief is that a heating and cooling system will last

about 10-12 years. But if you talk to people, they have had their system for almost 15 years or more. Over time though, the system becomes more costly to run and repair.

Prepare for this inevitable happening by knowing what replacement system you want. If you have a heat pump, there are at least three to consider: air source, mini split, or geothermal.

Each has a cost to purchase, install and run. What you must remember is that the more

efficient, or higher the seasonal energy efficiency ratio, or SEER rating, the lower your costs could be to operate the system.

SEER measures the cooling efficiency of a heating and cooling system, which means depending on thermostat settings, you could be saving energy and money.

South River EMC offers rebates on high-efficiency heating and cooling systems, 17 SEER and greater, for details visit [sremc.com](http://sremc.com) or call 910.892.8071 x 2152.

## Smart Thermostats Help You Control Costs

Smart thermostats can help you save. They're easy to use, they learn, and they're Wi-Fi compatible.

The display screen is visible and pretty straight forward, friendly programming for varied ages.

By learning, smart thermostats can help you make more effi-

cient decisions about heating and cooling your home.

Wi-Fi compatibility is a plus for families who have numerous hands adjusting the thermostat. With the ability to access your thermostat from around the house, at work, or on the go with apps, you don't have to miss out on savings.

If you don't have a smart thermostat, purchase one, an ecobee or Nest is eligible for a rebate. Once you have one installed, use it and begin learning and saving.

For details on the rebate visit [sremc.com](http://sremc.com) or call 910.892.8071 x 2152.

## Consider Energy Star, It Helps You Save

If you have an appliance that's going to need replaced, consider Energy Star.

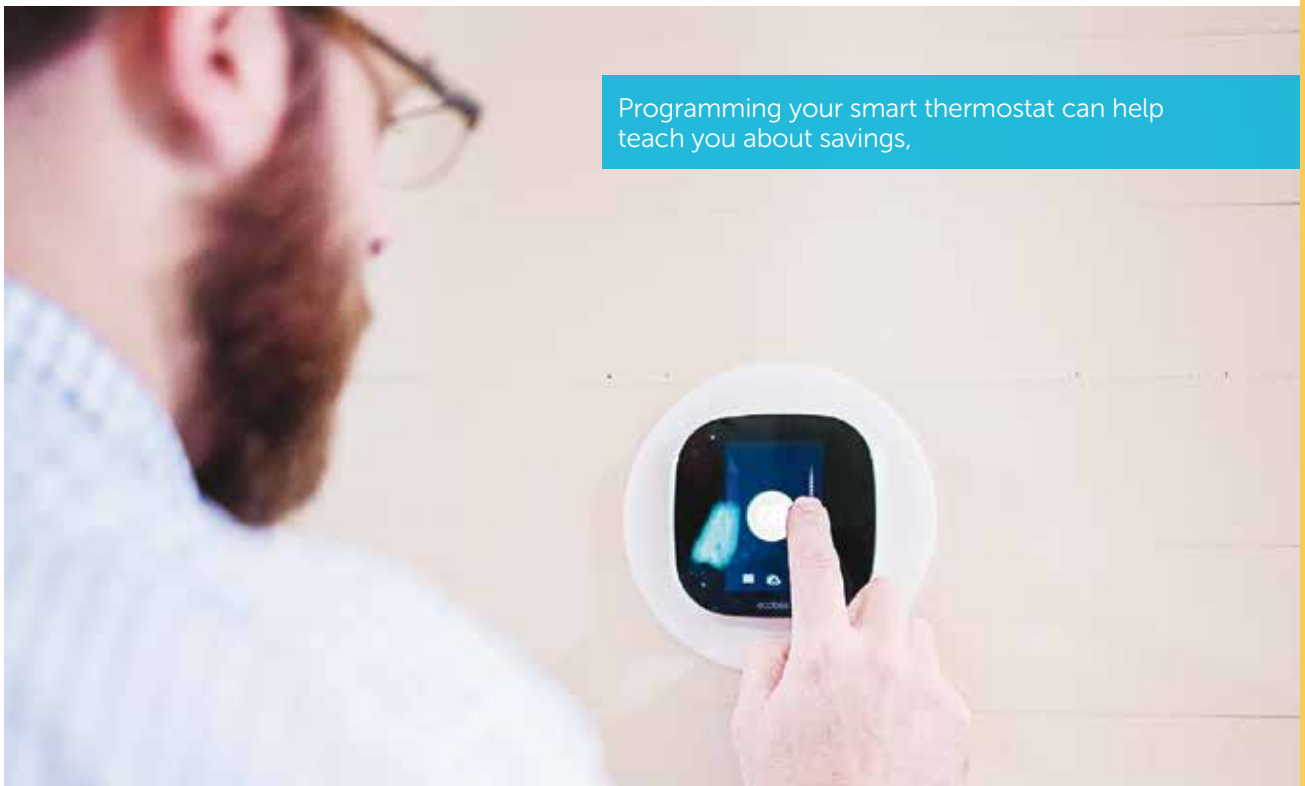
You might say, no, it's not really worth it, but depending on the appliance, it could help savings. For example, an Energy Star refrigerator can save you nine percent over a standard refrigerator. A refrigerator runs all day, every day. Those savings add up!

Maybe you aren't sold, but wait, Energy Star appliances are just the more efficient version of appliances you already have and use, like your clothes washer.

And they don't just save energy, for appliances like clothes washers, Energy Star certified appliances also save water.

Bottom line, if you need to replace a refrigerator, clothes washer, clothes dryer, or dehumidifier, do so with Energy Star. You could be eligible for a rebate, details can be found at [sremc.com](http://sremc.com) or by calling 910.892.8071 x 2152.

Start with one appliance, and the rest might follow.



## HERO Homes Can Save You Money

Homes can be built many different ways, so if you're thinking about building a home, why not go efficient?

Instead of building a home to code, consider a high efficiency residential option, or HERO, home. They're 30 percent more efficient than a home built to code.

How is this possible? With slightly better insulation, fenestration, air sealing, equipment, and lighting packages. Making more efficient choices in these areas can add up in savings.

There are two ways to build a HERO home, the prescriptive path, and the performance path. Both can help you save, and

both are focused almost entirely on the building envelope.

South River EMC offers several rebates on HERO certified homes for builders and buyers.

For details visit [sremc.com](http://sremc.com) or call 910.892.8071 x 2153.

## Learn New Tricks To Save Energy

Don't waste heat, air conditioning and money. By insulating and weatherizing your home you can improve comfort and promote savings.

Start learning where you could be losing air. Common places include: plumbing penetrations through insulated floors and ceilings, baseboard moldings,

dropped ceilings above bathtubs and cabinets, attic access hatches, and doors. Also, check your air ducts, as holes and loose connections allow air to escape and enter unchecked.

Lastly, insulation reduces the amount of heat flow between conditioned and unconditioned spaces, so making sure you

have enough in the attic and floor can help costs. Improvements like adding insulation, weather stripping and caulking can help you save, as well as making you eligible for a rebate.

For details visit [sremc.com](http://sremc.com) or call 910.892.8071 x 2222.

## Picking The Right Water Heater Means Savings

There are many water heaters out there, so when you need one, how do you know which is right for you?

You look them up, [energy.gov](http://energy.gov) has a great infographic with information on different systems including storage, tankless, heat pump, solar, tankless coil and indirect water heaters. From there you can consider cost, installation, space and more.

Keep in mind your water use, you don't want to purchase a system you can't recoup the cost on if you don't use a lot of water.

Before purchasing a unit, see if there are any rebate offers. The Cooperative offer a \$150 rebate on solar water heaters and a \$200 rebate on heat pump water heaters. Although this shouldn't be the sole reason for purchasing such a unit, the heat

pump water heater is two to three times more efficient than a standard storage water heater.

For information on water heater rebates from South River EMC visit [sremc.com](http://sremc.com) or call 910.892.8071 x 2152.

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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



PO Box 931  
Dunn, NC 28335  
910.892.8071  
800.338.5530  
[www.sremc.com](http://www.sremc.com)