



# South River EMC Communicator

## TAP INTO WAYS TO SAVE

**S**outh River EMC offers members numerous ways to save both energy and money, many of which can be found on our web site, [sremc.com](http://sremc.com).

One such way is with our energy calculators. The calculators are a great way to learn and teach about ways to save and use energy.

The Cooperative has the following calculators for use: appliance, lighting, heat pump, space heating, phantom-load reduction, water heating, and holiday lighting.

You can learn about the basics of energy and electricity, as well as conducting a virtual energy assessment of your home.



Another great program is your HomeEnergy Profile, which can give you energy-saving information tailored to your home. To get the most out of your HomeEnergyProfile, you must answer the questions, otherwise, you will receive standardized savings tips.

But don't take our word for it, visit [sremc.com/rebates-efficiency-tips](http://sremc.com/rebates-efficiency-tips) and try the calculators today.

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# CREATIVE VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

Your Cooperative is taking steps to attack right-of-way clearing, or ROW, in the most efficient manner. This requires looking at things from a different perspective.

The Co-op's ROW program helps keep the 4,765 miles of electric line clear and free of debris. It includes spraying an environmentally safe compound, as well as trimming trees interfering with electric service.

This is all done in an effort to provide reliable and safe electric service to you. In order to do this in a cost-effective way, the Cooperative has partnered with a company called AiDash.

AiDash takes an innovative approach to ROW by using satellites and algorithms to establish trimming and maintenance schedules for our electric system.

This is done by tracking the growth of plants. The ability to do this could help cut down on scheduling and work costs for the Cooperative by sending crews to specifically targeted areas.

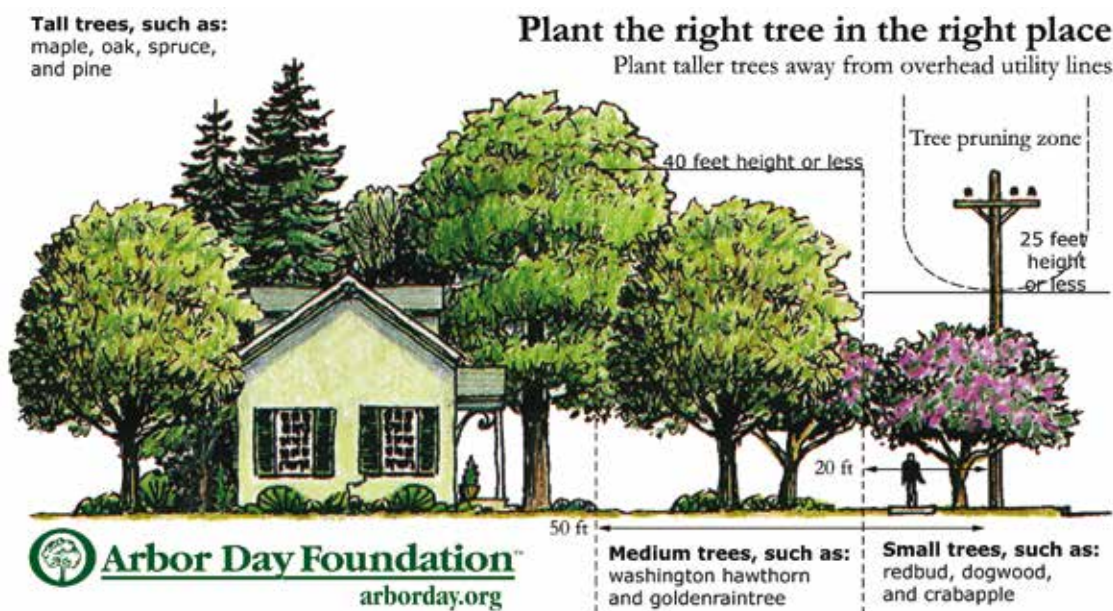
AiDash protects a quarter of a million miles of overhead line in 35 states and on three continents.

AiDash uses programming that identifies changes from historical satellite imagery to understand growth rates, tree density and tree health, while also measuring radial clearance of vegetation on overhead lines. Being able to look at right-of-way clearing in such a quantifiable way helps resources to be better dedicated to combat and control growth.

The company's intelligent vegetation-management system combines the power of high-resolution, multi-spectral satellite imagery, artificial intelligence, and predictive analytics to optimize work, minimizing on-site inspections as well as predicting risk zones.

Growth-prediction capabilities provide real-time insight into growth rates of vegetation and calculate the rate at which it may spread beyond clearance levels over the years. Again, making it easier to plan and prepare.

It could help to reduce costs significantly, allowing the Cooperative to allocate budgets even more effectively for vegetation management while maintaining reliability.



When planting around electric facilities, this graphic helps you to determine the best type of trees that will provide beauty and not encroach on equipment. For more information visit the Arbor Day Foundation at [arborday.org](http://arborday.org).

# OPERATION ROUND UP YEAR IN REVIEW

Cooperative members have been participating in the Operation Round Up program since 2007.

In 2008, South River EMC awarded its first grants, and since then, has awarded \$2.7 million in grants to local non-profits, schools and individuals.

In 2021 alone, South River EMC's Community Assistance Corporation (CAC) awarded \$179,302 in grants, with \$49,684 being awarded during the December funding cycle alone.

The following nonprofit organizations received grants for \$5,000: Disabled American Veterans, Chapter 74; Dunn Police

Athletic and Activities League; South Wake Conservationists, Chapter of North Carolina Wildlife Federation; Special Olympics North Carolina; and the Salemburg Volunteer Fire Department.

The Mingo Masonic Lodge received a grant for \$1,265, while the Stedman Volunteer Fire Department received a grant for \$5,395.

Educational institutions are eligible to receive grants up to \$10,000, and Western Harnett Middle School received a grant for \$8,024.

Lastly, a \$10,000 grant went to the Human Connections Fund.

The Human Connections Fund was established several years ago so that cooperative employees and members can help other cooperative employees impacted by extreme weather events. The fund was activated in December to assist cooperatives and members in Kentucky, as a result of late-season tornadoes.

South River EMC members participate in Operation Round Up by rounding up their bill to the next dollar each month. The money goes into a fund managed by the CAC.

## INTERESTED IN BASKETBALL CAMP?

This summer, current fifth, and sixth graders can attend the Touchstone Energy Basketball camps offered at NC State and UNC-Chapel Hill, courtesy of South River EMC.

The camp opportunity gives 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 (dates TBA) and the Wolfpack Women's Basketball Academy at North Carolina State University in Raleigh (June 19-22).

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.
- Provide their own transportation to and from camp.

Winners will attend 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 to March 31.

Eligible students interested in the scholarship can visit [sremc.com/basketball-camps](http://sremc.com/basketball-camps), or [ncelectriccooperatives.com/sports-camps](http://ncelectriccooperatives.com/sports-camps) to complete an application. Applications must be completed online.



# NEW YEAR, NEW SET OF GRADES

**L**ast call for the February "Give Us An A" drawing.

This program recognizes students who achieve at least one A on their most recent report card. That means, if your child's recent report card has one A or five, they are eligible to participate.

Simply 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](mailto:connections@sremc.com).

You 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 Cooperative will draw 15 names to receive a \$25 gift card.

The 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 close of business February 8.

# NOMINATIONS MADE BY COMMITTEE

**T**he committee on nominations announced the submission of incumbent directors at a meeting of the board of directors on January 4:

- District 4:** Jeffrey Martin
- District 6:** Dr. Elena Sue Godwin-Baker
- District 8:** Clifton McNeill Jr.

Terms of office for directors are staggered so only three expire each year.

The ways which directors may be elected:

**1. By petition.** Any 100 members of the Cooperative, acting together, may make nominations in writing, listing the nominees separately with respect to the particular term and the particular directorate district from which they are nominated, not less than 40 business days prior to the meeting.



**2. From nominations by a committee on nominations.**

*\*During each director election, when the number of nominees is the same as the number of directors to be elected from a particular district, the nominee will be declared elected automatically and no balloting will be required.*

**2022 Nominating Committee Members:**

- District 1 - Glenda Taylor
- District 2 - Raylon Wood
- District 3 - Joseph Anders
- District 4 - Johnnie Baggett
- District 6 - Carol Hudson
- District 7 - Warren Paul Jones
- District 8 - Walter Clark
- At Large - Robert Earl Butler Jr.

# HAVE AN OPINION? WE WANT TO HEAR IT!

**E**mails. You get them everyday, you give many of them a cursory glance and then delete them.

Buried in there, or more glaring, because you haven't seen this address before, is an email from [cooperativesurvey@bellomyonline.com](mailto:cooperativesurvey@bellomyonline.com) or [cooperativesurvey@bellomymail.com](mailto:cooperativesurvey@bellomymail.com).

Before you delete it, you open it to see what it's about. It's a survey, but why should you fill this out? You may not know this, but South River EMC is continually conducting member surveys.

The email is asking you to participate in a survey about your satisfaction with the co-op's performance as your electric service provider. You may not receive an email, but instead a phone call, but the caller will identify as conducting a survey for South River EMC. With all the scammers out there, you may wonder if this is legitimate. Rest assured, in this case, it is!

South River EMC works to collect member feedback to help us identify areas in which the co-op



is meeting your expectations, as well as areas where improvement is needed.

Your responses also allow us to compare South River EMC's performance with other participating cooperatives and leading corporations across the economic spectrum.

## Here's what to look for:

Company	Area Code	Email Address
Bellomy Research	704 919	<a href="mailto:cooperativesurvey@bellomyonline.com">cooperativesurvey@bellomyonline.com</a> <a href="mailto:cooperativesurvey@bellomymail.com">cooperativesurvey@bellomymail.com</a>

## Thank You for Participating— We're Listening

We want to thank our members who have participated in previous surveys and ask that if you are a member who is contacted to take part in this survey, whether by phone or email, please consider doing so. Your feedback matters and helps us improve our services and add value to your membership.

Your opinions are very important to us, and we thank you in advance for taking the time to participate in this study.



South River EMC will be utilizing Bellomy Research, a top marketing firm in the U.S.,

to conduct the survey. Through your assistance, we have been able to improve our service delivery and we continue to maintain a satisfaction score in the high 80s to low 90s. We still have room to improve, so please continue providing valuable feedback.

If there are any questions about this survey, please contact us at 910.892.8071 or by emailing [sremc@sremc.com](mailto:sremc@sremc.com).



## Save With Your Appliance Choices

Energy Star appliances can save you money, which is why they carry the Energy Star logo.

Refrigerators use energy all day, every day, which is why making smart choices when purchasing one is so important.

***Purchase an appropriately sized refrigerator.*** Generally, the larger the refrigerator, the greater the energy consumption.

***Consider a refrigerator with fewer doors.*** Fewer doors reduce air leakage. To maximize savings, minimize the number of doors and replace seals around doors if they are not airtight.

***Consider recycling your old second refrigerator.*** Refrigerators over 15 years old could cost you more than \$80 per

year. On average, an old refrigerator uses about 35 percent more energy than a model that has earned the Energy Star. If you must replace one, do so with Energy Star.

South River EMC offers a rebate on Energy Star certified appliances. For details visit [sremc.com/energy-star-appliances](http://sremc.com/energy-star-appliances) or call 910.892.8071 x 2153.

## That Includes This Appliance, Too...

Another such appliance that you can get Energy Star certified is a pool pump.

You might think you don't need a new pump, but if your pool has a pump and it's single speed, consider it.

A single-speed pump uses one speed, the highest, for all tasks, cleaning, filtering, etc.

However, all these tasks do not require such high energy and water use. In fact, having a pump that performs this way uses an excess of water and energy.

By replacing a single-speed with a variable or two-speed pump, you can more closely align water and electricity use with your pool activities. You

can also cut down on the run time of your pump for additional savings.

Rebate information can be found at [sremc.com/pool-pumps](http://sremc.com/pool-pumps).

## Why Home Improvement Helps

When you get your electric bill each month, you might go through a range of emotions. You might also think that something has to change, or question what improvements you can make to cut costs. While there are many things you can do, temperature also plays a part in your electric costs.

You will need to consider the temperature approximately 30 days ago, since you are paying for energy already used. If temperatures were cooler, you might see more energy use, even if you had temperatures in the 70s last week.

While you can't change the weather, how you use your energy in response could help you save. Why not tackle some of those home improvement ideas you have? There is cost in them, but think of the savings potential.

For example, weatherstripping and caulking, relatively inexpensive, can prevent air infiltration. Air infiltration is the loss of conditioned air from inside to outside, and unconditioned air from outside to inside. The drafts caused by air infiltration often lead to thermostat adjustments, which can result in higher energy use. By weatherstripping around doors and windows, and caulking around plumbing penetrations and more, you could begin improving comfort and garnering savings.

Insulation, which prevents heat transfer, or the loss of heated air outside, can also contribute

to energy use. Areas with little, sparse, or no insulation, for example, your attic, is just such a place. Heat can leave through your roof during the winter, making your home cooler. In the summer, this would make your home warmer, as there is little to no resistance to heat entrance. Replacing or replenishing insulation could help improve comfort and lower costs.

If you have an electric water heater, wrap it. Conventional electric water heaters work to the water warm. However, they are notorious for standby heat loss. With water heating accounting for the second greatest energy cost each month, wrapping your water heater could keep water warmer longer for less.

There could be an uptick in energy use when your emergency heating comes on. If your heat strips get stuck, which can happen, it adds up quickly and significantly. Making sure your heating and cooling system is serviced twice a year helps you keep up on any issues that could arise with your system.

Using SmartView to check energy use on a regular basis can help you find issues sooner.

Making improvements can improve your comfort, help cut costs, and may make you eligible for rebates.

Visit [sremc.com/rebates-efficiency-tips](https://www.sremc.com/rebates-efficiency-tips) for more information.



### Check Out Home Energy-Use Monitors

As a South River EMC member, you have a variety of ways to keep track of your daily energy use. You can have the total sent to you via text daily, to your e-mail inbox, or you can login to your account at [sremc.com](http://sremc.com) and look at SmartView, to create a bar graph of your daily energy use.

But what if you want to dig deeper? If you are curious about the specifics of where your energy is going, and how much certain appliances are contributing to your monthly bill? A home energy monitor would be a great tool for you.

A home energy monitor is a device that breaks down the total daily electricity use in your home by appliance or circuit. These devices normally install inside the home's breaker panel and monitor voltage and amperage. That information is then communicated to the cloud via a wireless Internet connection and, depending on the model, is made available in real time via a website or smartphone app.

There are two general kinds of home energy monitors available on the market. The first type is "smart" or "learning" energy

monitors. The Sense Energy Monitor is the best example of this particular kind. Once installed, this device has two leads that clamp around the two "hot legs" that feed the breaker panel. It monitors the voltage and amperage information on these two legs and "learns" what appliances or equipment are running, based on the consumption that it registers. That data is sent to a smartphone app that gives the homeowner a breakdown of use per appliance and other useful information. The cost of a unit like the Sense Energy Monitor is around \$300.

Another option is a more user-directed energy monitor like the IoTaWatt or Emporia energy monitoring system. These monitors have several leads (as many as 16 depending on the model) that clamp around the individual circuits you select inside the breaker panel. This allows the homeowner to pick and choose which appliances and equipment are monitored.

For example, one lead from the device could be clamped onto the circuit that feeds the heat strips for the home's heat pump



Advise Guy Aaron Jackson

in order to monitor how much energy the auxiliary heat is using during the winter months. Likewise, another lead could be clamped onto the circuit that feeds the water heater. The data recorded by these monitors is also accessible online or via a smartphone app. The price of energy monitors like these are lower, starting around \$150.

Either way, if you decide to go with a "smart" energy monitor, or one that is more user directed, you will gain a fuller understanding of how you use electricity. This greater knowledge will go a long way in helping you make better decisions in the way you use energy, saving you money.

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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



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