



member Connections

A publication for Surry-Yadkin EMC members

August 2018



Stay cool during the dog days of summer

Welcome to the “dog days of summer,” the hottest, most sultry days of the year. If the heat and humidity aren’t enough to make you sweat, the thought of your electric bill may do the trick. Fortunately, we have ways to beat the heat without breaking the bank.

Throw your air conditioner a bone. When it’s hot outside, your air conditioner needs all the help it can get. Open interior doors and vents to help air circulate and reduce the strain on your HVAC system. Along with that, close exterior doors and windows, as well as any blinds, shades or curtains, to help keep the heat of the day out and cooled air in. Open these window treatments at night.

Put your energy use on “paws.” Waiting to use major appliances, especially those that generate heat like the clothes dryer and dishwasher, until the late evening,

overnight or early morning hours can help your home stay cooler.

Grill some hot dogs. Avoid using an indoor oven or stove, and grill out or try a cold meal like a salad instead. Check out carolinacountry.com/grilling for inspiration! In addition, if you go out to eat, ask for a “doggie bag” and eat the leftovers the next day instead of fixing another meal.

Fetch a fan for easy savings. Instead of turning down the thermostat, use a ceiling or portable fan. Make sure your ceiling fan turns counter clockwise during hot weather to push cool air down. Remember to turn fans off when you’re not using them; fans cool you, not the room.

Save money throughout the dog days of summer and all year with our energy management tools at syemc.com/content/energy-management-tools.

Thank you

While on Youth Tour, I learned a great deal about our incredible country. Because of my interest in politics and law, my favorite part of the trip was touring the Capitol. I had the opportunity to speak with my district representative, Virginia Foxx — truly an eye-opening experience.

I enjoyed connecting with other youth from my state and country who have similar life goals.

I cannot thank my electric cooperative enough for sending me on this trip of a lifetime. It was definitely a stepping stone for my future. I



encourage others my age to apply for Youth Tour and experience this great opportunity to learn about your country, see things others will never see and bring home a vast amount of knowledge that will last you a lifetime.

Caroline Cason
Youth Tour 2018 Delegate

MANAGER'S MESSAGE | GREG PUCKETT
Investing in reliability



Dear Valued Member,

Preparing for the future by investing in our system infrastructure is a prime example of how your electric co-op is looking out for you. Seven years ago, we began a major upgrade that is expected to be completed by the end of 2020. Projects of this size and expense require extensive planning and coordination.

If you follow us on social media, you've likely seen some work being done at the Mount Airy Substation. Crews have been constructing a new 100-kV delivery point that is expected to be energized this month. Before that work could begin, the transmission line between Mount Airy and Westfield substations was upgraded from 44 kV to 100 kV. Older wooden poles were also replaced with steel poles. That phase of the project was completed in 2014.

This delivery point will provide improved service to the Westfield Substation. Also, a new 15-MVA substation transformer is being installed at Westfield. This one piece of equipment costs nearly \$357,000.

In addition to improving the performance of the heavily loaded Westfield Substation, construction of the new four-mile transmission line and Double Creek Substation will relieve Westfield of some of that current load.

Construction on this final phase of the project is expected to begin this winter after the right-of-way is purchased. Our goal is to be energized by



the end of 2020. This new substation will include four new circuits.

This investment allows us to continue to serve our members with safe, reliable and affordable electricity for years to come.

Cooperatively yours,

You're invited to the
2018 Surry-Yadkin EMC Annual Meeting

Saturday, October 6
 Surry Central High School
 Registration begins at 8:30 a.m.

- Light Breakfast •
- Interactive Displays •
- Business Meeting •
- Door Prizes •



Always call before you dig.

On August 11 (8/11), SYEMC is reminding members to dial 8-1-1 at least three working days before beginning a digging project. This free and simple step can save lives and reduce risk of injury, repair costs, fines and inconvenient outages.



"Every time you break ground, even for something simple like planting a shrub or installing a mailbox, you should call 811 first," says SYEMC Line Superintendent Mike Mills. "No matter your level of expertise, it's important to know what's below the ground. Making contact with an underground utility line can be deadly."

The national 811 "Call Before You Dig" phone number links residents to a local call center that dispatches local utility companies to mark line locations with paint or flags. These marked lines show you where it is – and isn't – safe to break ground. Once your lines have been marked, make sure to dig carefully around the marks, not on top of them. It's important to call each time you are planning to dig.

For more information about safe digging and the "Call Before You Dig" process, visit nc811.org.

Summer camp on the hardwood



Congratulations to our Touchstone Energy® Basketball Camp Scholarship winners Annalee Bell of Roaring River and Jacob Mitchell of Dobson. Annalee (left, with Coach Wes Moore) attended the Lady Wolfpack Camp at NC State University, and Jacob (right, with Coach Roy Williams) attended the Roy Williams Basketball Camp at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.



Pictured above from left are Caleb Harris, Bryon Kennedy and Susan Duncan.

ConnectWith: Your electric co-op's IT professionals

Innovation through information technology

We're protecting your privacy while enhancing system performance.

Safety, security and reliability are just a few areas in which your SYEMC Information Technology personnel provide vital support. From the security of our members' privacy to substation communication, these professionals are on alert 24/7.

With phone and online scams occurring almost daily, our IT professionals take steps to ensure the security of our members' personal information. "We will never call you threatening to disconnect your power,"

We will never call you threatening to disconnect your power. PCI compliance standards prohibit us from accepting payments over the phone. -- Bryon Kennedy

says Bryon Kennedy, systems administrator. "PCI (Payment Card Industry) compliance standards prohibit us from accepting payments over the phone." All payments by phone must be completed through our automated system.

As electric grids become "smarter," the need grows for system communications and security. The addition of a supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) system will allow us to gather and analyze real-time data, which also helps reduce wholesale power costs.

This system of hardware and software will allow us to more accurately predict and pinpoint the location of power outages. The result will be fewer

and shorter interruptions in service, as well as a quicker response by crews to outages. Our goal is to have SCADA installed and online by the end of 2019.

Secure communication between SYEMC headquarters and each substation is critical. IT Support Specialist Susan Duncan is tasked with the responsibility of ensuring these lines of communication function properly, as well as maintaining the equipment.

"If a firewall is not working properly, we won't be able to efficiently restore

power to a member's home after an outage," says Duncan. Needless to say, these firewalls are monitored closely, and issues are addressed immediately.

Drone technology has been on the rise, especially in the utility industry. These remote-controlled, flying cameras allow us to inspect poles, wires, transformers, rights-of-way and more. "By identifying potential problems early, we're able to prevent major outages and expensive repairs," says Caleb Harris, GIS coordinator and FAA-certified drone pilot.

Harris collects images and videos during flights and shares data with systems engineers and operations



Drone technology is being used by SYEMC for more-efficient, lower-cost pole inspections.

personnel. This data has proven to be effective during recent pole inspections and construction of the new delivery point at the Mount Airy Substation.

Rest assured, your electric co-op's IT department is looking out for your safety and security while contributing to the reliability of our electrical distribution system. As advances are made in technology, these professionals are committed to keeping pace with the latest industry trends. Providing safe, reliable, affordable and secure service is our top priority.



Committed to our communities

Proceeds from co-op's golf tournament benefit various local organizations.

On a hot and humid Thursday in June, 96 golfers teed up at Cedarbrook Country Club for the 7th Annual Surry-Yadkin Electric Membership Corporation Golf Tournament. The popular fundraising event benefited the co-op's Operation Round Up® program this year. More than \$25,000 was raised through this year's tournament.

Operation Round Up is a voluntary program allowing SYEMC members to give back to their communities by rounding up their monthly electric bills to the next dollar amount. The difference is donated to the Operation Round Up program and provides valuable assistance to several local charitable organizations and families in need throughout the SYEMC service area.

"It's amazing how a little pocket change can make such a big difference," says Rhonda Hill, SYEMC Community Projects Committee chairperson and Operation Round Up fund agent. Since the program began in 2001, SYEMC members have donated more than \$1.3 million to our community.

Operation Round Up is governed by a board of directors made up of volunteers from each of the counties served by SYEMC. They review each application and make decisions about how funds are allocated.



SYEMC's Rhonda Hill (right) is joined by Operation Round Up board members Carolyn Haynes and Cody McCormick.

The proceeds from this year's tournament will make a big difference in the lives of the families served by several local organizations. "We're appreciative of the continued support from Pike Electric, Carter Utility and Tree Service (CUTS), all of our sponsors and teams of golfers who made this year's tournament another success," says SYEMC Executive Vice President and General Manager Greg Puckett.

If you're not already rounding up your bill each month, contact Member Services at 336-356-8241 and join Operation Round Up today.

member Connections

Member Connections is a monthly publication intended for the members and friends of Surry-Yadkin EMC.



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