



member Connections

A publication for Surry-Yadkin EMC members

September 2018



Harvesting safety

Practice electrical safety on the farm.

Farming is among the more dangerous occupations for several reasons, including potential for encounters with electrical hazards. Before taking to the fields, Surry-Yadkin EMC urges farm workers to be aware of overhead power lines and to keep equipment and extensions far away from them.

Farm managers should share this information with their families and workers to keep them safe from electrical accidents.

Keep yourself and equipment at least 10 feet away from power lines in all directions, at all times. Use a spotter when moving tall equipment and loads.

Use care when raising augers or the bed of a grain truck. Estimating distance can be difficult, and sometimes, a power line is closer than it looks.

Always lower equipment extensions, portable augers or elevators to their lowest possible level, under 14 feet, before moving or transporting them. Wind, uneven ground, shifting weight or other conditions can cause you to lose control of equipment and make contact with power lines.

Never attempt to raise or move a power line to clear a path. If power lines near your property have sagged over time, call SYEMC to repair them.

Don't use metal poles when breaking up bridged grain inside and around bins.

As in any outdoor work, be careful not to raise any equipment, such as ladders, poles or rods, into power lines. Remember, non-metallic materials, such as lumber, tree limbs, tires, ropes and hay, will conduct electricity, depending on dampness and dust and dirt contamination.

Use qualified electricians for work on drying equipment and other farm electrical systems.

If you are on equipment that contacts a power line, do not exit the equipment. Call 911 immediately. When you step off the equipment, you become the electricity's path to ground and receive a potentially fatal shock. Wait until utility workers have de-energized the line and confirmed it is safe for you to exit the vehicle. If the vehicle is on fire and you must exit, jump clear of the vehicle with both feet together. Hop as far from the vehicle as you can with your feet together. Keep your feet together to prevent current flow through your body, which could be deadly.

Electrical work around the farm can also pose hazards. Often, the need for an electrical repair comes when a farmer has been working long hours and is fatigued. At such times, it's best to step back and wait until you've rested.

Source: SafeElectricity.org

MANAGER'S MESSAGE | GREG PUCKETT

Co-ops give you a return on your investment



Dear Valued Member,

When you pay your electric bill, you are making a monthly investment in your cooperative. As an electric co-op member, you are also an owner. Capital credits are the difference between the co-op's operating costs and revenues. They are your share of the ownership of Surry-Yadkin EMC, a not-for-profit, member-owned cooperative.

Each year, when possible, we return capital credits to our members. This year, we are excited to return approximately \$921,000 to our members who received service from us in 1993. If you are owed capital credits from that year, you should receive a credit on your September electric bill.

The amount of capital credits you earn in a given year is based upon the amount of capital you contribute to the co-op through payment of your

monthly bills. The more electric service you buy, the greater your capital credits account. The sum of your monthly bills for a year is multiplied by a percentage to determine your capital credits.

Your co-op employees work hard daily to maximize the return on your investment. We're saving money in a variety of ways. You, our members, are helping us cut expenses on paper and printing costs by participating in our Go Co-op Green program. Choosing paperless billing and digital newsletters can help us save thousands of dollars each year. Those savings can directly affect your capital credits at the end of the year.

This year, we are excited to return approximately \$921,000 to our members who received service from us in 1993.

Cooperatively yours,

The power is in your hands.



Take control of your energy use with SmartHub today.

With the SmartHub app, you can:

- Check your energy use.
- Pay your bill.
- Report a power outage.
- Contact your electric co-op.

Download the FREE app from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store.

Learn more about SmartHub at syemc.com/content/smarthub.

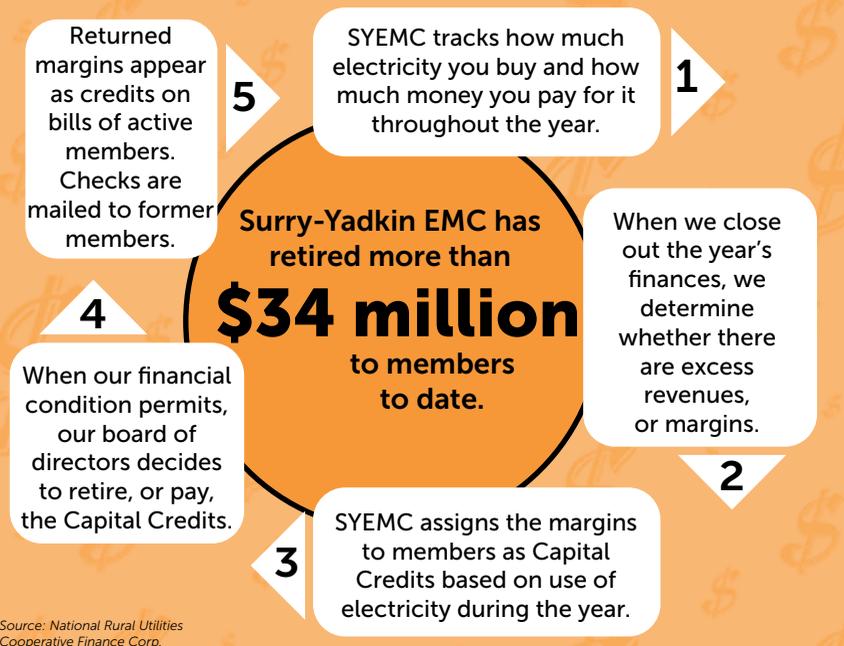
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How do capital credits work?

Because electric co-ops operate at cost, any excess revenues are returned to members as capital credits.



Source: National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corp.



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Learn more about our paperless options at syemc.com/GoCoopGreen



SYEMC Member Stacey Culler



SYEMC Member Charles Nall

ConnectWith: Fellow co-op members saving energy and money

Members shift to time-of-use rates and save

The shift-to-save challenge

Sticky notes filled the Culler house with reminders about when to use and not use certain appliances when the family first began shifting their energy use to off-peak hours. Stacey Culler became increasingly aware of how much energy her family was using, and how much it was costing. A combination of social media posts, newsletter articles, monitoring their energy use with SmartHub and a visit to SYEMC's Annual Meeting last year convinced her to make the switch to Shift to Save, the co-op's time of use rate.

She had some concerns up front. Like most skeptics, she thought something was hidden in the fine print. "Could we really make a lifestyle change during those hours?" The real question was "Did I want to make the change and take the chance?"

"We laugh now because it really hasn't been that big of an adjustment, other than remembering to do normal chores at night or early in the morning," says Culler.

The Cullers also have an ecobee® smart thermostat that is programmed to adjust during peak hours.

"I thought our biggest challenge would be getting the whole family on board. Surprisingly, everyone has adjusted to the peak hours, and we spend more time together talking as a family," says Culler. Their adjustment has been almost unnoticeable, since weekends and holidays are not included in the Shift to Save program.

"It's like a challenge for us all to use less power and see how low we can go," she says. "We saved \$73 in our first month!" Her advice to others is to get everyone on board and compete. SmartHub and a smart thermostat are key. If all else fails, a small investment in a few sticky notes is definitely worthwhile.

Learn more about Shift to Save at syemc.com/shift-save.

Well worth the wait

Charles Nall waited more than 40 years for what he considers a practical plug-in electric vehicle (EV). Lack of battery technology has been the limiting factor until now. Experts predict that electric cars and plug-in hybrids could make up 35 percent of new light-duty vehicle sales by 2040. In addition, 200-mile-range electric cars, like Nall's Chevy Bolt, will eventually become the norm.

"The only disadvantage is charging on long trips," says Nall. "But, this is not much of a concern if you plan your stops." Many hotels have charging stations, like the Fairfield Inn in Elkin and Hampton Inn in Dobson. The Nalls' 238-mile range is perfect for most of their trips.

The Nalls decided to take a chance with SYEMC's new EV time-of-use rate. "We adjusted easily," says Nall. "We heat water during off-peak hours and still have plenty when we need it. We turn the dishwasher on at bedtime and, of course, charge the car during super off-peak hours (10 p.m. - 5 a.m., Monday - Friday)." They also adjust their thermostat accordingly.

The change was surprisingly easy for the Nalls. "We also discovered energy was being wasted in some ways," says Nall.

"I was spending about \$250 per month on gasoline," he says. "I spend none now, and my electric bill has gone down. We are saving about \$300 per month overall." And the \$500 rebate Nall received from SYEMC nearly paid for the charging unit he installed in his garage.

Nall's advice to others considering an EV is to go for a test drive and experience how fun they are to drive. He encourages others to "Give it a try! You may save money and help the environment with very little effort." Whether you have an EV or not, SYEMC offers a time-of-use rate for you.

Learn more about time-of-use rates at syemc.com/rates.



Students at Tharrington Elementary present their project funded by a Bright Ideas grant.

Last call for Bright Ideas

Deadline approaches for teachers to apply for Bright Ideas grants.

Teachers with creative ideas for hands-on classroom projects should apply now for a Bright Ideas education grant of up to \$1,000 from Surry-Yadkin EMC. But hurry! The final deadline to apply for a grant is September 19. Interested teachers can find the application, grant-writing tips, and more information on the Bright Ideas website at ncbrightideas.com.

“Surry-Yadkin EMC has supported teachers through the Bright Ideas program since 1994, and we know firsthand how dedicated and creative our local educators are,” said SYEMC General Manager Greg Puckett. “By providing educators with new tools to reach students, we’re proud to also be investing in young minds and the future of our communities.”



Grants for the 2018-2019 school year will be awarded in November for projects in all grade levels and all disciplines, including math, science, language, art, English and history. Last year, SYEMC awarded \$6,250 to local teachers to fund 10 different projects.

The Bright Ideas grant application requires an outline of the proposed project, a detailed budget and a description of the benefit to students. Applicants are encouraged to highlight the innovative, creative elements of the project and to proofread carefully.

SAVE THE DATE!

Make plans to attend our Annual Meeting on Saturday, October 6, at Surry Central High School.

Join us for breakfast, live music, prizes and valuable information. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m.

Learn more at syemc.com.



Connecting with local job seekers

SYEMC human resources personnel Anna Culler (left) and Karen Lloyd visited with local job seekers at the Greater Mount Airy Chamber Commerce’s 2018 Job Fair on July 26 at Mount Airy High School.

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



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