



The complexities of EPA's Clean Power Plan

From the manager

The Environmental Protection Agency's regulation to limit greenhouse gas emissions from power plants will have a big impact in Mississippi. Labeled the "Clean Power Plan," it aims to reduce nationwide carbon dioxide emissions from power plants by 32 percent below levels recorded in 2005.

At 37 percent, Mississippi's required goal for reducing emissions is even higher than what has been set for the rest of the nation. Electric cooperatives in Mississippi, including Southern Pine, will have to work with other utilities in the state in partnership with state government to achieve this aggressive goal.

This regulation will likely cause the closing of power plants that use coal before they have been fully paid for. In these situations, electric co-op members will have to continue paying for a power plant that no longer operates while also paying for electricity.

What does that mean for you, our members? Unfortunately, it probably will mean higher electricity bills. But we're still crunching the numbers. The Clean Power Plan is extremely complex and far-reaching. In fact, it's probably the single most complex regulation co-

ops have ever faced and will no doubt have a negative impact on our industry.

Southern Pine is a not-for-profit cooperative that provides electricity to more than 66,000 members across 11 counties, and we are more than just poles and wires. We look out for our members every day and

we work hard to improve our communities. At times like this, our concern for community is even deeper when we see regulations and other policy changes that will increase the cost of electricity. Every amount added to our members' bill to pay for additional regulations

adds to the burden of some who already struggle to afford household expenses.

The potential for a cost increase is why we are so engaged on this issue. That's the root of our concern because we are worried about the impact on our members. We will keep up the fight and work for legislative and legal solutions in partnership with electric co-ops around the country in order to provide you with safe, affordable and reliable electricity. We encourage you to contact your legislators to voice your opinions about issues that will directly affect you.



By Donald L. Jordan
General Manager

Scam alerts on the rise

Americans lose billions of dollars each year when they fall victim to identity theft or scams designed to separate you from your money. The targets of these thieves can be anyone, including Southern Pine members.

For example, some Southern Pine members in recent months have told us of receiving calls

from someone posing as Southern Pine employees threatening to cut off their power if they didn't pay their bill immediately. They were given instructions on how to make the payment.

It's a scam we are seeing more and more of. But you should know that Southern Pine will not call you and threaten to cut off your power. Nor will we call and ask for personal information, such as your Social Security number or bank routing number.

This scam is only one of many that are being used to steal identities or money.

For example, one of the latest scams involves tech support. Victims get an unsolicited call from someone claiming to be with Microsoft or Windows tech support. They tell the victims that a virus has been detected on their computer. The victim is asked to log on to a website and follow the instructions. When the victim does so, malware is loaded onto his or her computer so the caller can steal usernames and passwords.

Mississippi Attorney General Jim Hood said the scam is widespread in Mississippi.

"The scam artists behind this fraud know that creating a sense of urgency, such as the possibility of a computer virus, will cause the consumer to act quickly, often without verifying the source of the request," Hood said. "The scam artists are trying to get personal information they can use to

commit identity theft."

Another scam has people posing as employees of banks or credit card companies who try to get sensitive financial information.

"Like the computer virus scam, we receive calls each day from consumers who have received 'urgent alerts' about their financial accounts,"



Hood said. "These emails or calls often tell the consumer they need to 'verify' account information or that the consumer's account may have been compromised."

But financial institutions don't ask consumers to verify their information in that manner, Hood said.

Hood's office recently warned Mississippians of a scam involving thieves posing as Internal Revenue Service agents.

The scammers tell the victim that the call is the official final notice and that the IRS is filing a lawsuit against them. They are told they owe money to the IRS and the amount must be paid immediately through a pre-loaded debit card or wire transfer.

Failure to make the payment, the victim is told, would result in arrest, deportation or suspension of a business or driver's license.

Victims may even be told they have a refund in an effort to trick them into sharing private information.

Hood said if you get such a call or an unsolicited request for information, do not respond.

"Instead, contact the business directly to inquire about any concerns or updates to your account. If you have any questions, contact our Consumer Protection Division at 1-800-281-4418 before responding to a suspicious call or email," he said.

Southern Pine Youth Leadership winners



Caleb Harrison



Tanner Rogers



Ward Winstead

Three high school junior students who are Southern Pine members will receive leadership training and get a first-hand look at the legislative process in Mississippi and Washington, D.C., starting this month.

The Youth Leadership Program, sponsored by the Electric Power Associations of Mississippi and supported by Southern Pine, sends a group of students to Jackson and Washington, D.C., each year to learn leadership skills that will help them in the future.

Southern Pine's student representatives for 2016 are:

- Caleb Harrison, Taylorsville High School
- Ward Winstead, East Rankin Academy
- Tanner Rogers, Presbyterian Christian School

"The Youth Leadership Program helps us develop future leaders of this state and nation," said Southern Pine General Manager Donald L. Jordan.

"Southern Pine has proudly supported this program over the years because we think it's important to prepare our young people for leadership roles."

They were selected from among 25 juniors from around Southern Pine's territory who applied for the program.

The applicants attended Southern Pine's Cooperative University, held Dec. 2 on the Copiah-Lincoln Community College branch in Simpson County, where they were interviewed by outside judges.

Harrison, Winstead and Rogers and their families were invited to a luncheon on Jan. 21 where officials from the Electric Power Associations of Mississippi told them about the program.

This month, they will attend a three-day workshop in Jackson, where they will meet dozens of other junior students from Mississippi electric cooperatives who were also chosen for the program.

They will have an opportunity to meet with some

Southern Pine is an equal opportunity employer

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer. If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form.

You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email program.intake@usda.gov.

of Mississippi's leaders, including legislators from their home districts and statewide elected officials, and will get a first-hand look at state government.

In June, the Mississippi students will join more than 1,600 Youth Tour participants representing electric cooperatives around the nation. They will spend a week touring Washington, meeting our nation's leaders and honing

their leadership skills.

All expenses for Southern Pine's students for the Jackson workshop and the weeklong trip to Washington—travel, lodging and meals—are paid by the cooperative.

We congratulate this year's participants and encourage students to consider applying this fall for the 2017 program. Details are available from guidance counselors.

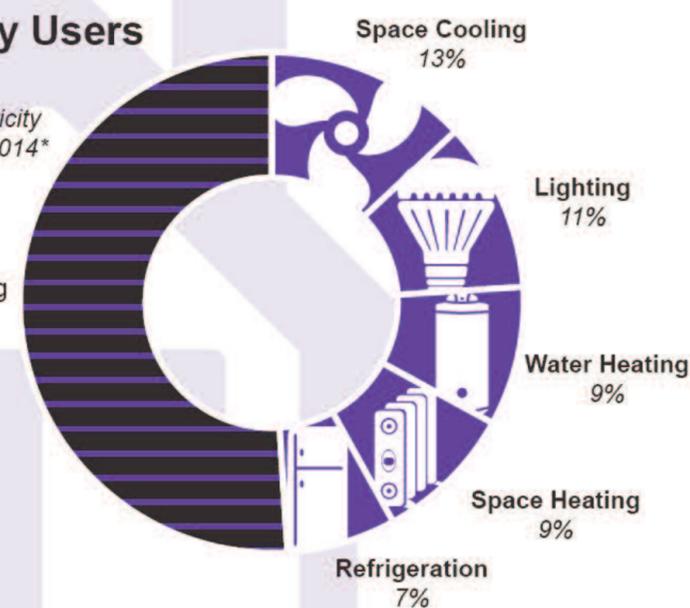


Door prize winners at Southern Pine's 2015 annual meeting were Elna Hardy, Seminary, \$750 of electricity; Ruthie McCurdy, Bay Springs, \$500 of electricity; and Marlene Keys, Taylorsville, and Shirley Jones, Raleigh, \$250 of electricity each.

Top Five Energy Users in U.S. Homes

Estimated residential electricity consumption by end use, 2014*

Other uses include TV, set-top boxes, home entertainment and gaming systems, monitors and networking equipment, clothes dryer, small electric devices, heating elements and motors.



*Source: EIA