

SOUTHERN PINE CONNECTION

News & Notes from Southern Pine Electric



FROM THE MANAGER

I bet most of you can say technology has changed your world over the years. It sure has done the same for your cooperative. There are so many different tools available to help us connect to our people faster and operate more efficiently it can make your head spin trying to keep up with the latest and greatest. Our staff works constantly looking for ways to better serve our members with innovation because we recognize that our changing world of technology will continue to drive up expectations.



By Donald L. Jordan
General Manager

For almost 10 years, Southern Pine Electric has utilized power line carrier and cellular technology to read meters remotely. This advanced metering infrastructure has greatly reduced the number of visits to a member's residence for collecting meter reading data. Besides saving member dollars on collecting meter reads, the technology provides more information about the member's use that helps them understand how their decisions at home affect their energy consumption.

As members call in to report an interruption, outage management software collects the outage data and organizes the information for analysis and coordination. The system uses the organized data to predict system device locations. This helps dispatch and service personnel respond faster and more efficiently.

Over the last couple years, engineers and technicians at Southern Pine have been working together to develop an operations dashboard. The dashboard integrates geographic, equipment location and outage information so that operations personnel can view real-time outage and personnel locations from their iPad, tablet or other mobile device. Viewing this information from office, vehicle or home helps improve response time for outage restoration.

Our engineering department recently began deploying SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition) equipment that will allow remote access and monitoring capabilities to substation transformers, breakers, regulators and other devices. With 41 substations, this project will take several years to complete. Once the electronics are in place, we will have a better ability to prevent lengthy substation outages and respond faster to equipment failures.

Just like the rising expectations for fast access to information in our technology world, we realize your expectations for high reliability and fast response are rising. I heard one of our former leaders tell a group of business leaders, "Companies who do not innovate will eventually evaporate." Southern Pine will continue to seek innovative ways to provide better service to our members while also being good stewards by investing wisely in technology that makes sense.

Cooperation among co-ops

Cooperation among cooperatives is one of the principles that guide electric cooperatives. That was evident when a tornado struck south Mississippi recently, leaving four dead and destroying or damaging more than 1,100 homes, businesses and

churches. Southern Pine Electric sent crews to Petal in Forrest County to assist Dixie Electric Power Association, whose system lost 170 poles and 60 transformers. Below are photos of some of our crews at work in the Petal area.



Outages

To report an outage, call 1-800-231-5240. You can provide details about the outage to an automated answering service or speak with a member service representative.

You can monitor outages at www.southernpine.coop. Dispatchers are on duty 24/7.

Remember: If you see a downed power line, assume that it is energized and dangerous. Don't go near it. Call Southern Pine or 911.

Touch A Truck Jackson

The Junior League of Jackson will sponsor the Touch A Truck event March 24-25 at Trustmark Park in Pearl, and Southern Pine will be there on March 25. This annual event provides children with opportunities to explore, climb and touch trucks, emergency response vehicles, heavy machinery and other equipment. Southern Pine will have a bucket truck and a track machine used to move equipment into swampy areas. Get details at TouchATruckJackson.com. We hope to see you there!



Easy steps to energy efficiency

Do you want to save money and electricity but have limited time, money and patience? According to the Department of Energy, a "typical American family" spends nearly \$2,000 per year on their home energy bills. Much of that money, however, is wasted through leaky windows or ducts, old appliances or inefficient heating and cooling systems.

Luckily, there are several relatively easy ways to save energy without a substantial commitment of time and money. These efforts will help you save whether you own or rent an older or newly constructed home.

Where to start

According to *Money Magazine*, "improving the envelope" of your home is a good place to start. By placing weather stripping and caulk around windows and doors, you can keep cool air

inside during warm months and prevent chilly air from penetrating the indoors during colder months. Sealing gaps around piping, dryer vents, fans and outlets also helps to seal the envelope and creates greater efficiency. Apply weather stripping around overlooked spaces like your attic hatch or pull-down stairs.

Replacing incandescent bulbs with LED bulbs is one of the fastest ways to cut your energy bill. Replacing your home's five most frequently-used light fixtures or bulbs with models that have earned the ENERGY STAR rating can save you \$75 a year.

Wrapping up savings

Installing a blanket around your water heater could save you about 7 to 16 percent in water heating costs. For a small investment of about \$30, you can purchase pre-cut jackets or blankets and

install them in about one hour. On a safety note, the Department of Energy recommends that you not set the thermostat above 130 degrees Fahrenheit on an electric water heater with an insulating jacket or blanket; the higher temperature setting could cause the wiring to overheat.

It makes sense to ensure your home's heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system is performing at an optimal level. Checking, changing or cleaning your filter extends the life of your HVAC system and saves you money. Many HVAC professionals recommend cleaning the system filters monthly.

Take control of your energy savings

A programmable thermostat is one of the best energy-saving tools at your fingertips. It enables you to fine tune the



temperature during particular hours of the day. Many models allow you to differentiate between weekday and weekend schedules, and Internet-connected thermostats can learn your schedule and make adjustments automatically.

To learn about additional ways to save, log on to www.southernpine.coop.

You're A Member of Southern Pine Electric - Not A Customer!

And membership has its benefits:

- As an owner of Southern Pine, you help elect our leaders
- We offer assistance to help reduce your power bill with programs such as free energy audits and the Comfort Advantage program
- Members can get a free Co-op Connections card that offers discounts on hundreds of products and services, including prescription medicine
- We work for you!

See more at southernpine.coop!

Plant the Right Tree in the Right Place

Trees beautify our neighborhoods, and when planted in the right spot, can even help lower energy bills. But the wrong tree in the wrong place can be a hazard... especially to power lines.

For more tips on smart tree planting in your community, contact your local electric cooperative or visit www.ArborDay.org.

LARGE TREES	MEDIUM TREES	SMALL TREES
Height/spread of more than 40 feet, such as:	Height/spread of 25 to 40 feet, such as:	Avoid planting within 20 feet of power lines. When planting within 20 feet is unavoidable, use only shrubs and small trees.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maple • Oak • Spruce • Pine • Birch • Sweetgum • Linden 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Washington hawthorn • Goldenrain tree • Eastern redbud • American arborvitae • Dogwoods 	Height/spread of no more than 25 feet such as:
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Star magnolia • Crabapple • Lilac

70ft. 60ft. 50ft. 40ft. 30ft. 20ft. 10ft. 0

40ft. high or less

Tree pruning zone

Maximum tree height 25ft.

Be safe! Always call 811 before you dig to locate any buried utility lines.

Source: The Arbor Day Foundation and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association