



# Old Man Winter makes his presence known

I have memories of cold winters when the ice seemed to swell out of the cracks in the ground. For the past several years, I've wondered when we would experience a true winter. Well, Old Man Winter finally decided to show himself. I enjoy the seasons for what they are, especially when the season lives up to its individual traits. However, the recent cold streak leaves me concerned about our Southern Pine households.

I worry about the effect it will have on our members when they receive their power bills that cover those periods of extended freezing temperatures. The milder climate that we have experienced over the last 12-18 months has drastically reduced the amount of energy needed to heat and cool homes. This has resulted in lower



Jason S. Siegfried  
President/CEO

electric bills becoming the norm. Now that we are living in temperatures that are more appropriate for the season, I don't want our members to be surprised when they see how this winter impacts their electric bill.

We tend to assume that summer months are the costliest, but a cold winter month has proven historically to be the most expensive.

The amount of electricity required to heat your home is the key factor to consider as your heating unit is forced to work longer and harder to reach

its thermostat setting. Even if your system is not all-electric, you may still experience an increase in electricity use.

**This increase in consumption will cause higher electric bills.** Please remember, Southern Pine Electric has not increased its rates, and any increase in your utility bill will reflect increased electricity use. Even more important, please know that we are here to help. If you have any questions or concerns about your electricity bill, please contact your local Southern Pine district office or reach out to us on our website at [www.southernpine.coop](http://www.southernpine.coop). There you will find contact information, but you can also access our MyPower program, which can help you track your electricity use from month to month.

# What is safety?

What is safety? Webster's defines it as, "the condition of being safe from undergoing or causing hurt, injury, or loss."

At Southern Pine our belief is "safety isn't just about me." Think about this: If you get hurt, does it only affect you? If you can't work or do the things you love due to injury it hurts everyone. Your loved ones hurt with you and suffer with you. If you are no longer with us they will grieve your passing every single day. Safety is something we must all live each day.



Wes Lee  
Safety Coordinator

I was reminded of this fact on April 1, 2015. Being involved in safety for the past five years, I have sat through and presented numerous safety meetings, but also found myself disassociating from the practices discussed in the meetings.

As a Safety Coordinator, I know that you are 23 times more likely to be involved in a motor vehicle incident while texting and driving. Did this stop me? Sadly, no it did not. The real issue is that it took a tragedy to stop me from doing this.

On April 1 my family and I were absolutely rocked by a tragedy. My 16-year-old nephew was killed in a single-vehicle accident. My nephew was not just your average 16-year-old, as he excelled at everything he attempted. There wasn't a sport to be played that he wasn't the best on the field, but his true passion was baseball.

For my nephew, April 1, 2015, was like any other day, sleeping as late as possible before getting up to get ready for school. On the way to school he responded to several text messages while driving. He came into a curve too fast and flipped his car numerous times. With no seatbelt, my nephew was ejected from the car and was found lifeless in the street by first responders.

Why bring up this tragic story? You see, most of us have this belief that it will not ever happen to us. My nephew, I'm sure, felt that way. For most of us, me included, it takes a major event to change us. For me, it took the loss of loved one to get me to stop texting and driving.

Why do we let it come to that? Why not do it right the first time? I challenge everyone reading this to start living safely on a daily basis. Not some of the time, all of the time. Because remember, "safety isn't just about you."



# STAY CLEAR!

A downed power line may not be a dead line. It could cause serious injury or death.

If someone is injured by contact with a power line, call 911 and keep others away until help arrives.

If a power line falls across or near your vehicle while you are in it, stay inside until help arrives. If you must exit, jump clear so that no part of your body is touching the car when you land. **KEEP BOTH FEET TOGETHER,** and shuffle or hop at least 30 feet away from the vehicle.



[www.southernpine.coop](http://www.southernpine.coop)

*Southern Pine is an equal opportunity employer and provider.*

# 10 Easy Ways to Lower Your Power Bill

- 1 Set Your Thermostat**  
When it's warm out, set your thermostat to 78 degrees. When it's cold, 68 degrees.
- 2 Turn Off the Lights**  
Mom was right. Turn off the lights when you're not in the room. Even energy-efficient LED and fluorescent lights. Every little bit helps.
- 3 Turn Off Ceiling Fans**  
Ceiling fans only makes us feel cooler because they move air across our skin. If you're not in the room, you're wasting money if it's on.
- 4 Avoid Space Heaters**  
Space heaters aren't meant to heat a whole room, or run for very long. More often than not, it's less expensive to run an energy-efficient home heating system instead.
- 5 Line Dry Clothing**  
Instead of drying clothes in an electric dryer, hang them on a line and let the sunshine do the work. **It's free.**
- 6 Open Blinds on Cold Days**  
Open blinds during the day to let in extra warmth from sunlight. But shut them at night, to keep your warm air in.
- 7 Close Blinds on Hot Days**  
Shut your blinds during the day. That blocks out extra heat from sunlight, so your home stays cooler longer.
- 8 Kill the Vampires**  
Anything plugged in keeps sucking electricity, even when you aren't using it. To kill these "vampire electronics" unplug anything you aren't using: a phone charger, a microwave, a hair dryer. You get the idea.
- 9 Close Doors & Windows**  
When your heater or a/c unit is running, your home should be sealed. The more inside air you lose, the higher your bill will be.
- 10 Seal Up Cracks**  
Even with doors and windows closed, air can still escape through cracks, costing you money. The solution? A \$3 tube of caulk and some inexpensive weatherstripping.



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We use Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn to post information on how to become more energy efficient, safety tips and to inform members about special events throughout the year.

During weather-related events, these sites provide storm preparation details and outage information.

## Contact Us

Call or visit any of our offices. Business hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
 Taylorsville – 110 Risher St.; 601-785-6511  
 Brandon – 3215 Louis Wilson Drive; 601-824-7070  
 Newton – 1400 S. Main St.; 601-683-2200  
 New Hebron – 2504 Ferguson Mill Road; 601-694-2711  
 Hattiesburg – 7848 U.S. 49 North; 601-264-0185

## Sign Up Today for MyPower

MyPower is an online tool that allows members to check energy use, view previous bills and set a monthly electricity-use budget. The site also provides an easy to use method for reporting an outage and allows you to email questions or comments to Southern Pine. To sign up for MyPower, visit [southernpine.coop](http://southernpine.coop) and click on the MyPower icon in the center of the home page.