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Connecting with members

By David Bailey, General Manager SAEC

In today's mobile society, the world is literally at our fingertips. At South Alabama Electric Cooperative, we know our members are busy and sometimes need us outside of normal office hours. That's why we offer on-line tools that allow you to make payments, monitor usage, track outages, apply for service and disconnect service. We're taking advantage of technology to connect with our members.

Managing your bills and payments

Visit our website - www.southaec.com - to access your account history and make payments using our hassle-free on-line payment feature. Because safety is our top priority, rest assured that this payment option is safe and secure.

You'll also find information about our other payment programs including Levelized Billing, Bank Draft and our newly added E-billing option. You can sign up for any of these programs safely and conveniently through our website or if you have questions, you can always call Kadra in our billing department at 800-556-2060.

Monitoring your usage

Observing and controlling daily electricity usage can help keep your electric costs down. *My Meter* provides free tools for you to monitor usage, analyze past and current usage, as well as plan and conserve in the future. Compare your use and costs, set markers to monitor changes in your usage over periods of time, and get energy saving tips. You can even set alerts that are available on your mobile devices to keep you up-to-date even when you're on the road. Visit our website and click *My Meter* to sign up. Make sure you have a copy of your last billing statement handy. You'll need some of the information on it to set up your account.

Online Energy Audits

Finding time in your busy schedule for an in-house energy audit might be hard, but we offer on-line alternatives. It's user friendly and

only takes a few minutes to complete. An on-line energy audit can provide an assessment of your home's energy efficiency and provide helpful tips on how to reduce your energy bill. You can find our energy calculators located under the Member Resources menu of our website. Under the drop down menu, choose Energy Efficiency and you'll see a whole range of tips and calculators to try.

Tracking outages

We work hard to make sure you have reliable service, but sometimes outages do occur. Our website allows you to track our progress toward restoring your power. It's vital the cooperative has your current phone number listed on your account. Our mapping system ties your account number to the phone number we have listed. When you call 800-556-2060 and report an outage, the system tries to match your phone number to one on our account system. That's how we locate where the problem is. If you haven't updated your account information, you can do so by calling the office or by filling out the form located on the homepage of our website.

Applying for or disconnecting service

You can now submit applications for service through our website. Simply visit www.southaec.com to complete the forms.

Connecting with us

Like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter to stay informed of SAEC news and events. It's another avenue for us to connect with you. Remember, our social media outlets are not outage reporting methods. We do not monitor them 24 hours a day. To report an outage, please call our toll-free line at 800-556-2060. ■

David Bailey serves as the general manager of South Alabama Electric Cooperative. He is a resident of the New Hope Community in Coffee County and a graduate of Troy University.

Our office will be closed January 2 & January 16.
In the event of an outage or emergency,
please call 800-556-2060.

South Alabama Electric's Monthly Operating Report

KWH Sold 23,725,542	Total Accounts Billed 16,481	Consumers per mile of line 6.06
Average Utility Bill \$171.68	Total Miles of Line 2,721	
Average Use 1,440 kWh		

Information from OCTOBER 2016

Start your year with savings

An energy-efficient home will keep you comfortable while saving you money. Whether you take simple steps or make larger investments to make your home more efficient, you'll see lower energy bills. Over time, those savings will typically pay for the cost of improvements.

Your heating and cooling system is your largest energy expense, accounting for nearly half of your energy budget. To make the biggest difference in your energy bill, follow these simple energy strategies:

Adjust the thermostat. The simplest way to save money on heating and cooling is to adjust your thermostat. You can save as much as 10 percent a year on heating and cooling by simply turning your thermostat back 7 to 10 degrees from its normal setting for 8 hours a day. When you are home, we recommend your thermostat be set on 68° F in the winter and 78° F in the summer.

For even more control of your home's system, consider purchasing a programmable thermostat.

Leave the thermostat's fan switch on "auto" so the fan only runs when the unit runs. Setting the fan to "on" causes it to run all the time, whether or not heating or cooling is needed.

Seal cracks and gaps around windows, doors and siding with caulk and weather stripping. This prevents the loss of heated or cooled air.

Here's more tips specifically for the winter months:

Cover it up. Carpeting or rugs add to comfort and heat retention, especially if there is little or no floor insulation.

Unblock it. Keep furniture, carpeting and curtains from blocking vents and air return ducts.

Take it slow. Raise the temperature slowly to keep your bill lower. Quickly raising your heat pump's temperature activates the heat strip, which uses additional energy.

Limit the use of portable heaters. Space heaters are great for spot heating, but they are much less energy efficient than heat pumps. If you choose to use portable heaters, keep them away from flammable materials. Never use an oven to heat your home.

Let the sun shine in. Open drapes during the day to allow sunlight to naturally heat your home, and close them at night to reduce the chill you may feel from cold windows.

Keep in heat by closing your attic, basement, garage and exterior doors to prevent cold drafts.

Change your filter. A dirty filter makes your heating system work harder, using more energy. Simply replace your disposable filter or clean your washable one every month. Clean filters can also cut down on dust.

South Alabama Electric Cooperative works with our members to maximize your energy dollars. For us, saving starts here.

We value your membership. We value you.

Our scholarship program is growing

Back in 1997, the electric cooperatives in Alabama came together and formed the Electric Cooperative Foundation. The Foundation began as a way for cooperatives to give back to the communities they serve in the form of scholarships to deserving high school seniors.

This year, our program is growing. SAEC will be awarding up to 10 \$1,000 scholarships to qualified students in our service area.

“We’re excited to see this program grow,” David Bailey, general manager of SAEC, said. “This program reflects the value we place on education and on helping the families in our community. I know our past winners have found a lot of uses for the money and I’m sure our future winners will continue to use these funds to increase their knowledge, skills and have a positive impact on their communities and workplaces.”

Elaine Adams, mother of 2015 scholarship winner Cody Adams, said scholarship programs really help families out.

“Cody is majoring in software engineering at Auburn University,” she said. “I can’t tell you how much a program like this mean to our communities. I know it means a great deal to us as parents.”

The scholarship is not only available for students attending four-year colleges, but we have two set aside for students attending trade or technical schools.

“Students don’t have to attend a four year college to benefit from SAEC’s scholarship program,” Bailey said. “I think it’s important to help provide students with a path that leads to a fulfilling career, no matter which course they follow.”

Since 2001, SAEC has awarded 16 \$1,000 scholarships to students representing schools from across our service territory.

Previous winners included:

2016	Cassidy Catrett	Brantley High School
2015	Cody Adams	Luverne High School
2014	Mackenzi Johnson	Pike Liberal Arts School
2013	Lauren Knighten	Zion Chapel High School
2012	Sarah “Mallie” Alford	Luverne High School
2011	Erin Jordan	Charles Henderson HS
2010	Dillon Davis	Zion Chapel High School
2009	Haley Rebecca Dean	Pike Liberal Arts School
2008	Weston McDougald	Luverne High School
2007	Kimberly Lane Sanders	Luverne High School
2006	Dale P. Stinson, Jr.	Zion Chapel High School

2005	Nicholas Anthony Burk	Goshen High School
2004	Savannah Hughes	Pike County High School
2003	Andrea Zoe Vardaro	Luverne High School
2002	Toni Deveridge	Goshen High School
2001	Joseph Clinton Trnum	Luverne High School

The Electric Cooperative Foundation Scholarship can be used at in-state and out-of-state colleges and vocational programs. It can be used for a variety of college expenses including books, fees, and tuition.

“As a recent graduate of Brantley High School, I was honored to receive the Electric Cooperative Foundation Scholarship through South Alabama Electric Cooperative,” Cassidy Catrett, 2016 scholarship winner, said.

“This scholarship has helped me cover the required fees and cost of textbooks this year. I am a freshman at Mississippi State University studying Poultry Science. After obtaining a bachelors degree, I plan to attend pharmacy school.”

“The scholarship money awarded to me by South Alabama Electric Cooperative my senior year at Luverne High School has been very beneficial to my education,”



Cody Adams, 2015 Electric Cooperative Foundation recipient for SAEC, is at Auburn University pursuing a degree in software engineering.



Cassidy Catrett, 2016 Electric Cooperative Foundation recipient for SAEC, is at Mississippi State University working toward a degree in poultry science and has plans to attend pharmacy school.

Cody Adams, 2015 scholarship winner, said. “During my freshman year at Auburn University, I used the money to pay my student fees and to purchase my textbooks. I sincerely appreciate South Alabama Electric Cooperative for helping to fund my college education. Your investment in furthering our education through your scholarship program is a positive reflection of your dedication to your members and the communities you serve.”

Qualifications for the scholarship program are simple. You must be a graduating senior. You must plan to attend a four-year college, junior college, a technical or vocational program and be enrolled on a full-time basis at the institution of your

choice. Applicants must also be a dependent child of a member of South Alabama Electric Cooperative.

You can't receive a scholarship unless you apply.

“Forms are available at our office, through local schools and on-line,” Chellie Phillips said. “Please make sure you follow all of the directions and include all of the required information. Each year we receive incomplete applications that have to be disqualified.”

Deadline for this year's application is February 24, 2017.

It's time for the 2017 Youth Tour Competition

This competition is open to all high school juniors who attend school in Pike, Coffee or Crenshaw Counties or who have parents who are members of South Alabama Electric Cooperative. Applications have been sent to all area high schools or are available on-line at the cooperative's website - www.southaec.com.

Applications will be reviewed and must be filled out completely.

An independent panel of judges will select participants from qualified applicants based on application, essay and interviews. Winning students will be invited to attend the Alabama portion of the tour on March 7-9, 2017. Following the AREA Youth Tour, winners will be announced for a chance to continue on this summer to represent SAEC at the National Youth Tour held in Washington DC, June 9-15, 2017.

**For more information contact SAEC at 800-556-2060
or visit our website at www.southaec.com.**



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