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Tradition of service to continue

By David Bailey, General Manager

It's been a whirlwind few months around the cooperative. It hasn't been easy for me, or any of the employees, to say goodbye to retiring General Manager Max Davis. He was a strong advocate for the cooperative business model and for the communities we serve. His leadership and foresight has made South Alabama Electric Cooperative very successful.

I'm excited to step into the role he has vacated. While some things may change, if there's anything you, our members can be sure of, it's

ing action and doing what needs to be done. We also know we must embrace the value of responsibility and be accountable to you, our member.

Each member has a say in the operation of the cooperative no matter how much electricity you use. This ensures that democracy is practiced the way it is intended with equality for all members. This is a key difference between co-ops and investor-owned companies. For co-op members, this means that, as a member, you have equity (ownership) in the co-op.

I believe that membership in a cooperative is a powerful thing. It means we are your trusted source for energy and information and that our service is just as dependable as our power. It is my goal that we put our members first every day.

I hope you are as proud of South Alabama Electric Cooperative as I am. I grew up listening to my grandfather tell me about the day he first got power. I've also watched my own children grow up in this fast-paced, technology enhanced time. They are becoming the next generation of SAEC members. It's going to be a challenge, but

I know the cooperative has to meet the needs of every generation to be as successful during the next 80 years.

I look forward to leading your team into the future. South Alabama Electric will be the same member focused organization you have come to expect. I've told the employees that I have an open door. That applies to you, our members, as well. I look forward to meeting you and hearing what's important to you.

■ **David Bailey** serves as the general manager of South Alabama Electric Cooperative. He is a native of the New Hope Community in Coffee County and a graduate of Troy University. He is a Certified Public Accountant and has been with SAEC since 1993.

“I look forward to leading your team into the future. South Alabama Electric will be the same member focused organization you have come to expect.”

the dedication that both myself and the employees have to serving you. I've been with South Alabama Electric for 23 years overseeing the financial operations of the cooperative. I worked closely with the management and board in the development and evaluation of rates, budgets, construction work plans and loan applications.

I know that transition in leadership can bring about uncertainty, but I will strive to provide a smooth, well-functioning cooperative during this transition. I'm looking forward to exploring some new programs as well as continuing the ones you have responded to so faithfully over the years. I believe the community minded values mixed with the cooperative business model is what makes co-ops strong and set us apart from other utilities.

Back in 1937, the founders of South Alabama Electric Cooperative created it to serve the members that use the electricity we provide and we continue to do that today. This action embodied the values of self-help, tak-

South Alabama Electric's Monthly Operating Report



KWH Sold
22,556,107

Average Utility Bill
\$173.96

Average Use
1,383 kWh

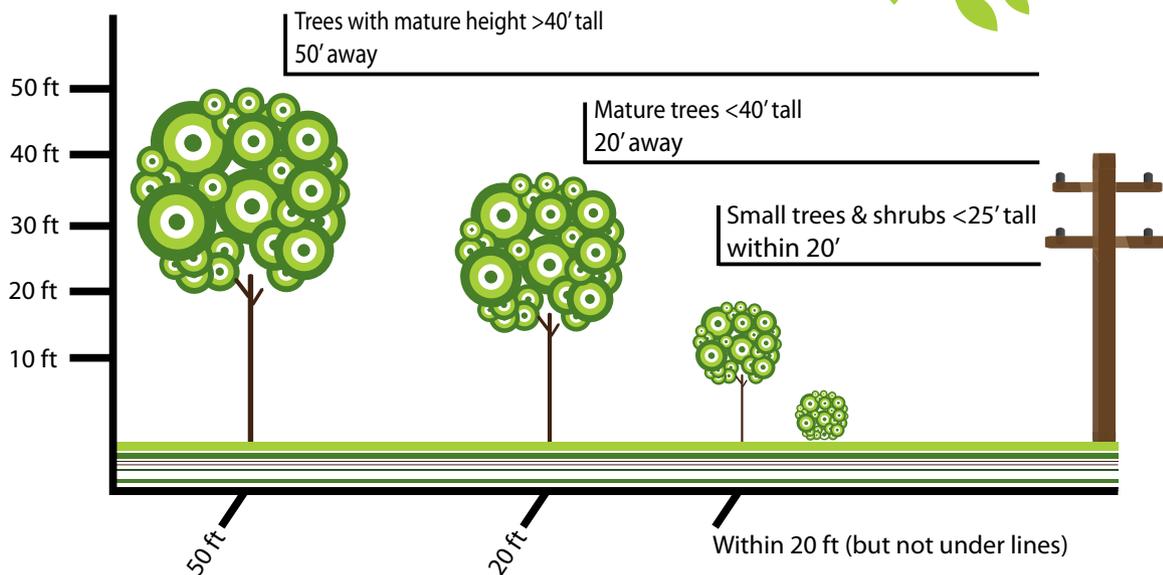
Total Accounts Billed
16,310

Total Miles of Line
2,709

Consumers per mile of line
6.02

Information from MARCH 2016

Give **T R E E S** a Chance



Trees planted too close to power lines grow into a BIG problem. To prevent power outages and safety hazards, these trees need to be trimmed and sometimes removed. Do your part to keep trees healthy and prevent power outages.

Plant trees a safe distance from power distribution lines.



Recognize, respect, report



On an early spring day 20 years ago, Aaron and Brett Studer anxiously awaited the opportunity to play outside.

“We had just moved into a new house and everything was kind of new,” explains older brother Brett. “We were still getting the feel for everything, and it felt like every nook and cranny of the property needed to be explored. So we were trying to get into whatever we could.” The brothers, only 5 and 8 years old, were innocently unaware of what they would get themselves into this particular day.

It was the day before Easter, and while their parents entertained visiting family inside the home, the boys ran outside to play with wooden swords. Aaron remembers, “We had these wooden swords and we would always pretend to be medieval and do sword fights.”

As the boys staged a play fight with their wooden swords, they made their way toward the back corner of their new home’s yard. However, they didn’t know anything about the green metal boxes around which they would soon be playing.

Brett found one of these metal boxes unlocked and pulled the top off. Aaron spied a big stick nearby that he thought would make a great backup sword. After picking it up, he stuck this wet stick inside the open box.

Immediately, there was a flash and a loud explosion.

Meg Studer, the boys’ mother, recalls, “The lights flashed in the home and the TV went on and off.” The power went out for multiple houses on the block.

“I saw sparks coming out of the green boxes,” continues Meg, “and both of my boys running toward me and screaming. Right

away we saw that Aaron’s face was black, and I thought that it was soot.”

While Meg attended to her son’s injuries and waited for paramedics to arrive, her husband ran outside to deal with a small fire that had started around the boxes. “My husband went rushing out there to see what was going on and decided he would try to put the fire out with a metal shovel. He didn’t realize it was an electric fire, and once he hit the fire with a metal shovel, it flew out of his hands,” says Meg.

Aaron was rushed to the hospital.



There, it was determined that he had not received an electrical shock. However, he did suffer second and third degree burns on his face.

Meg remembers her son in the hospital after the accident, “His entire face was completely bandaged, not recognizable at all.”

“I couldn’t really cry at all either, because my face was just smoldering,” recalls Aaron. Fortunately, he did not have any permanent scarring. Brett luckily escaped with no injuries.

Both boys learned important lessons about electrical safety that day. Brett remembers seeing the live wire after removing the top cover on of the box. “It was fortunate that I didn’t touch it,” he explains. “To a kid, you don’t even know what a power box is or what it holds.”

The Studer family is now sharing their experience in hopes of helping others stay safe. “I had no idea. It wasn’t even anything that I really ever thought about,” reflects Meg.

Electricity gets to your home in one of two ways: overhead or underground. If the distribution lines are underground, service pedestals and equipment may be housed in these outdoor boxes or cabinets.

South Alabama Electric Cooperative urges you to:

- Recognize that these boxes contain electrical equipment.
- Respect the equipment and the boxes—do not open, tamper with, or obstruct access to them.
- If there is any damage, such as a hole or broken lock, immediately report it to your utility.

Familiarize yourself and family members with any electrical boxes on your property. Meg advises other parents, “Look at the electrical boxes in your back yard, and check to make sure that they’re secure and locked.”

Padmount transformers often require larger enclosures. The transformer reduces the voltage of incoming electricity to a lower voltage for household use. While some homeowners consider padmount transformers an eyesore, it is important to not obstruct access to them.

Do not bury, install fences around, or plant immediately around electrical boxes in an effort to disguise them. These barriers may make the cabinet difficult to find and block access, should routine maintenance be needed or an emergency occur. While specific regulations vary by location, it is a good idea to maintain a minimum clearance of at least 10 feet to the front of the transformer and 2 to 5 feet to the rear and each side. Check local municipal or county codes as well as utility codes regarding how to landscape around this equipment.

The Studer family knows they are very lucky that their situation was not worse. “That could have been the end of my story right there that day,” says Brett.

From his close encounter with electricity, Aaron advises, “You know, you’ve got an electrical box in the back and nobody really thinks to go check to see if it’s got a padlock on it, and that’s definitely something that I recommend doing. I know I sure will when I have my own home.”



Aaron made a full recovery and is pictured here with his brother Brett. As summer approaches and your children are outside playing, please be aware of dangers that may be hiding in plain sight.

■
To learn more about the Studers’ story and watch their video, visit SafeElectricity.org.

Retrofitting your manufactured home for energy efficiency

If you live in a manufactured home, chances are you may have a disproportionately higher energy bill than a family living in a modular or traditional wood-frame home. The good news is there are many ways you can improve your home's energy efficiency.

Manufactured home or mobile home?

First, a clarification. Some use the term manufactured home and mobile home interchangeably. A mobile home is a factory built home constructed before 1976 when the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) set national standards that nearly every manufactured home must meet. Thereafter, factory-built homes were called manufactured homes and are engineered and constructed in accordance with the 1976 federal code administered by HUD.

Manufactured homes come in all shapes and sizes. They may be single- or multi-sectioned and are available in various sizes and floor plan configurations. There are many differences between manufactured homes built before the U.S. HUD Code took effect in 1976 and those built afterward. One of the major differences is energy efficiency. Those built before federal standards were put in place were generally not as energy efficient as later models, even though thermal standards were changed in 1994. And while your manufactured home may have been built to the energy standards of the time, significant progress has been made over the past decades with high-efficiency mechanical equipment, windows, insulation, siding and roofing materials.

In short, whether your home is less than five years old or more than 50, most homes can benefit from energy efficiency measures simply due to wear and tear. Sunlight, seasonal temperature changes and wind can increase air leakage. Doors and windows

may not close tightly and duct work can spring leaks, wasting cooling and heating energy.

If your home was built before 1976, the Dept. of Energy recommends the following steps to retrofit your manufactured home and improve energy efficiency:

1. Install energy-efficient windows and doors
2. Replace insulation in the belly
3. Make general repairs (seal bottom board, caulk windows, doors, ducts, etc.)
4. Add insulation to your walls
5. Install or seal belly wrap
6. Add insulation to your roof or install a roof cap.

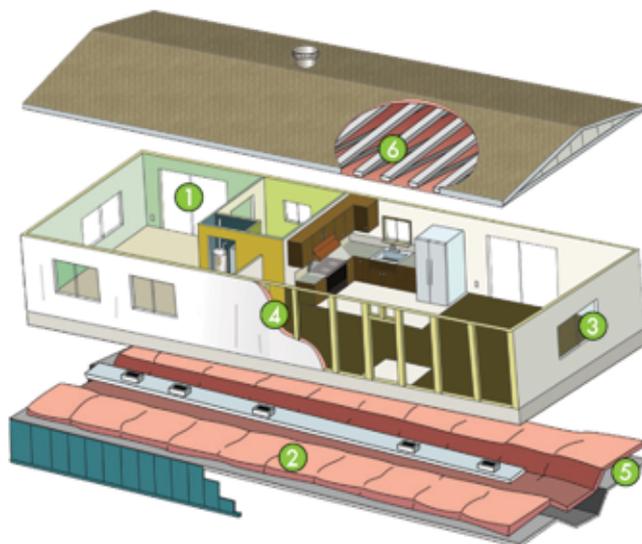
Additional energy saving tips

In addition to the measures listed above, consider caulking and weatherstripping windows and doors, particularly if you are not able to replace them with more energy-efficient ones. Properly seal any openings around ducts and plumbing fixtures. Replace any incandescent light bulbs with LEDs – both indoors and outside. Reduce “phantom” loads by unplugging electronic devices such as computers, printers and gaming systems when not in use. If you are planning to move to a new manufactured home, look for the Energy Star rated model.

■ **Anne Prince** writes on cooperative issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

RETROFITTING YOUR MANUFACTURED HOME FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY

- 1 Install energy-efficient windows and doors
- 2 Replace insulation in the belly
- 3 Make general repairs (seal bottom board, caulk windows, doors, ducts, etc.)
- 4 Add insulation to your walls
- 5 Install or seal belly wrap
- 6 Add insulation to your roof or install a roof cap



Original artwork provided by Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives

Brundidge



**Come join us for our
Annual 4th of July Parade
on Saturday, June 25th.
Everyone is invited!**

**Parade begins at 9:00 a.m.
with entertainment to follow at the Knox Ryals Pavilion.**

PARADE ENTRY FORM

Fill out and return to: BBA, P.O. Box 251, Brundidge, AL 36010

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____ Type of Unit _____ Size _____

Deadline is June 22 - For more information call 334- 735-2306 or 334-735-2179

Line-up will be at the Brundidge National Guard Armory

www.brundidgealabama.com

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