



Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Currents

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Share these **ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIPS** with children and teens to help keep them safe.

1 DO NOT climb or sit on green boxes or other electrical equipment.



2 STAY AWAY from electrical equipment marked "keep out," "high voltage," or "danger."

3 NEVER ENTER the fenced area around a substation to retrieve an item or pet.



4 Fly kits, remote-control devices, and drones FAR AWAY from overhead power lines.



Safe Electricity.org

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Protecting Our Members

By: Chris Reese, President & CEO
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These days, keeping the lights on doesn't just mean protecting and hardening our power lines against the threat of bad weather.

Maybe you have seen the news out of North Carolina that two Duke Energy transmission substations were deliberately attacked a few weeks ago, leaving more than 40,000 people out of power. What some news outlets did not cover is that a rural electric cooperative in Moore County, North Carolina - Randolph EMC - was impacted by the attacks as well. Much like how JCP&L ties into our system via two different delivery points, Randolph EMC's delivery point was fed by the substations that were attacked.

The North Carolina electric cooperative's quick thinking led to an amazing, creative solution. By building two new tie lines over a nearly three-mile span, they restored intermittent power to 2,600 members in a matter of days. This was achieved by hard work and cooperative mutual aid. The tie lines enabled the co-op to restore service to members on a rolling basis due to power constraints. Randolph EMC members in the affected area had to conserve electricity so that what was available would not overload the newly constructed, temporary system.

Duke Energy said it will cost millions of dollars to repair its equipment from the two damaged sites. Power to those affected has since been repaired. The FBI and state authorities are assisting local law enforcement with the investigation. This crisis reiterates the need for our sector to remain vigilant as we work to maintain reliability in spite of both natural and manmade threats.

This event calls attention to the fact that protecting the grid and keeping the lights on has taken on new meaning across the electric sector. Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative constantly works to prevent outages and protect the reliability of our system from threats, whether they are natural or manmade. As your electric

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Protecting Our Members

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provider, part of offering the highest quality of service is keeping that service secure and reliable. These days, as technology advances, so does the risk of cyberattacks like phishing, data leaks, or passwords being compromised. Today, almost all of the electric grid relies on computers and electronics. That's why we stay hyperaware to defend the network against growing threats.



Maintaining and enhancing the security of the electric grid is a top priority for us. Security means regularly inspecting and repairing equipment to prevent wear and tear. It means upgrading our equipment to withstand storms and severe weather. It means constantly trimming or removing trees that are hazards to our lines. It means monitoring our computer networks and servers, and having the latest protective methods installed along with training our employees in how to recognize scams and false communications. It even means having law enforcement routinely patrolling our substations and having surveillance equipment installed. Finally, it means working together with co-ops across the country to pool resources, share knowledge, and develop technology that can help us protect against cybersecurity threats.

We can't stop a storm or predict every possible disruption, but as a co-op we do everything in our power to keep our members protected.

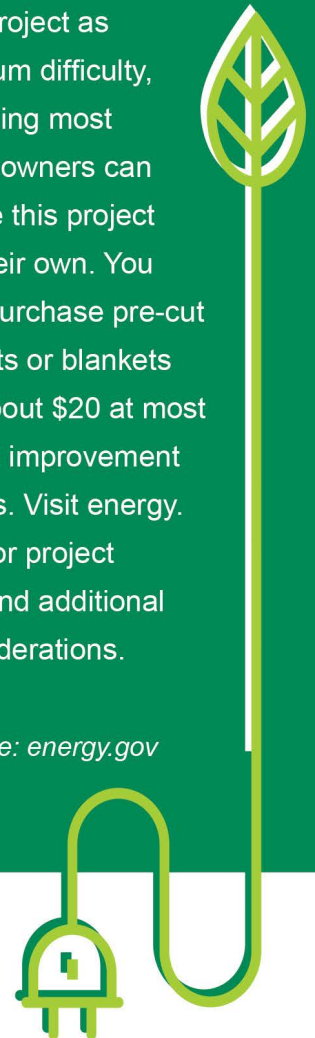
Chris

It's easier than ever to pay your bill!
Go to www.srecbillpay.com

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Did you know insulating your electric water heater can reduce standby heat loss by 25% to 45%? This could save you 7% to 16% on annual water heating costs. Insulating your electric water heater is an easy, inexpensive project that can improve energy efficiency and save you money each month. The Dept. of Energy rates this project as medium difficulty, meaning most homeowners can tackle this project on their own. You can purchase pre-cut jackets or blankets for about \$20 at most home improvement stores. Visit energy.gov for project tips and additional considerations.

Source: energy.gov



Community Champions

By: Steve Sokolowski, Marketing Associate
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“Concern for Community” has been one of the guiding principles of Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative since the day in 1937 when the first trickles of electricity ran through our lines. We hold fast to that tradition to the present day by sponsoring community programs, running donation drives, and supporting local students on their path to becoming the next leaders of our community and cooperative.

SREC’s employees, management, and board of directors have all made a commitment to making our community a better place. Perhaps none have exhibited this better than the late Ray Cordts.



Sometimes referred to as “Mr. Sussex County,” Raymond W. Cordts was a mainstay in Sussex County’s business community and a member of SREC’s board of directors for 27 years, most recently serving as our board’s Secretary and Treasurer. Ray brought humor and compassion to every room he entered and, as both a vocal supporter and a leader, was an important part of many of the nonprofit organizations that uplift those who need it most in our community. Sadly, Ray passed away on March 20th, 2022.

This year, SREC is proud to introduce the Ray Cordts Community Champion Award in his memory. This new award aims to support those students who display their own concern for community, a history of volunteerism, and a commitment to making their community or their school a better place.

This is not a scholarship, so it is not based on grades nor is it required that the student plan to attend college or trade school after graduation in order to be eligible. SREC will present up to two awards each year to students that are high school seniors who live in SREC-powered homes. Each award will amount to \$500, with an additional \$500 being presented to a local, nonprofit organization of the awardee’s choice.

If you know a student who fits this profile, please let them know about this award. We want to recognize the accomplishments of local youth who value their community and put in the work to contribute to its wellbeing. Applications for this award will be open until March 7th, 2023. More information can be found on our website’s Scholarships & Awards page at www.sussexrec.com/scholarships.

Washington, D.C. Youth Tour

LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL JUNIORS:
If your home is powered by Sussex Rural Electric, you can apply for the trip of a lifetime: an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C.!

Youth Tour will take place from June 18th - June 23rd!

Applications are due **February 17, 2023! Apply today!**

www.njyouthtour.com

Why Choose the Trades?

By: Claudia Raffay, Director of Marketing & Member Services
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High school graduation is a landmark moment and a cause for celebration, but it also comes with a lot of uncertainty. For the first time, all high school graduates are welcomed to “the real world.” This means that major decisions must be made that can determine the direction of the rest of their lives.

For many students, this means moving on to college. It’s only a recent phenomenon that most students pursue a college education after graduating high school. In the past, it was rare for people to have the means to pursue higher education. While it seems great that college is more accessible, that is ignoring that many students go down that path without a clear career goal in mind and most must take out loans to afford their education. With college becoming more of a “default” path, millions of college graduates enter the workforce every year to find that a degree no longer helps them stand out to hiring managers like it once did.

On the flip side, we are facing a shortage of skilled professionals in the trades. Trade jobs, like lineworkers, electricians, plumbers, HVAC professionals, welders, and more, are a vital facet of our economy. They provide important services that only those with the correct training can perform.

The issue seems to stem in part from the trades becoming stigmatized among young people. With college becoming the norm, some students who may not feel college is the right fit for them can feel pressured into going anyway - simply because that is what is expected of them. This becomes more of an issue when you factor in the ever-increasing cost of a college education and the loans that come with it, with increasingly slimmer chances of landing a well-paying job after graduation.

Our students need to know that college is not the only path! Choosing trade school rather than college may be a better decision for some students. SREC started the “Trade Up” initiative to try and change the narrative of the trades being stigmatized in favor of college. The trades are skilled labor and are vital to keeping our modern society going. If your child is not sure what career path may be best for them, it is important to remind them that “trading up” is a valid option that can bring with it technical expertise, financial security, and personal satisfaction.

If your child chooses to go to trade school, they will get specialized instruction in their field of choice. Trade school provides the benefit of both hands-on experience and classroom instruction to make sure students are prepared for their future career. Following graduation, they will have a skillset that is in-demand by employers, making them more hireable. In addition, their starting salary is likely going to be higher than that of the majority of college graduates.

To support students who want to pursue the trades, Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative offers up to two scholarships each year. If you are a member of SREC and your child is a high school senior planning to attend trade school or a certification program, this is the scholarship for them!

The SREC Trade School Scholarship awards up to two students with a \$2,000 scholarship to put towards their trade education. Whether they plan to be an electrician, a lineman, or one of the many other professionals in the trades, Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative can help them get started. Applications are due by March 7, 2023, so make sure they act fast! You can find all the details of this application and our other awards at www.sussexrec.com/scholarships.

