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**SANTEE ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE NEWS**
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FIND US ON



**SANTEE ELECTRIC IS AN EQUAL
OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER AND
EMPLOYER.**



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



The two primary drivers of cost for your co-op

WHAT DRIVES COST for electric utilities? Storms? Gas prices? The cost of labor? Environmental

regulations? Supply chain issues? Yes, all of those. However, the two main drivers of cost for your cooperative are meter density and load factor. This month, I want to share why they matter so much.

Meter density

A utility's meter density refers to how many meters, or customers, receive service from each mile of infrastructure. It is not unusual for a for-profit utility to have a meter density of 30 per mile. So, basically, there are 30 customers who share the cost of every mile of line that the utility must construct, operate and maintain.

Santee Electric Cooperative has a meter density of approximately eight per mile. That means the cost of constructing, operating and maintaining each mile of our power lines is spread between only eight of our member-owners.

Meter density is why electric cooperatives were created in the first place. Numerous utilities were already serving the densely populated portions of our country long before electric cooperatives were created. Electric cooperatives were tasked with going into the more sparsely populated areas where it was harder to realize a return on investment.

Load factor

Load factor is the ratio of your average demand to your peak demand. Basically, it measures the efficiency of your power consumption (not to be confused with the efficiency of your home). Think of a gym with workout equipment. The load factor would be the average number of people exercising throughout the day compared to the maximum number of people exercising at any given moment. If, on average, there are 25 people working out when the gym can accommodate 50, the

load factor is 50%. Peak demand occurs when the gym is busiest, reaching its maximum capacity, like during the after-work rush hour.

I have stressed in recent issues how electricity is relatively inexpensive to purchase and deliver during off-peak hours and quite costly during peak hours. This ties in very closely with load factor.

What are we doing about it?

Since these two factors drive SEC's costs, they also affect your power bill. So, what, might you ask, is the cooperative doing to try to manage costs? On the load factor side, our new rate structure, as well as our smart thermostat and water heater switch programs, go a long way to help members lower their energy use, especially during peak periods.

Regarding meter density, your cooperative works hard with area developers to make it easy to build much needed homes in our service territory. After all, the cost of a mile of line is easier to bear when shared by ten members instead of only eight.

Santee Electric also is involved in economic development, which does more than just bring jobs and investment to our area. It also helps us manage costs. The industries that move into our service territory have large load factors because they typically buy as much electricity when it is inexpensive as when the system is peaking. Furthermore, the jobs that are created bring homeowners to the area, and that improves meter density.

Just know your cooperative is doing all we can to manage these two factors, and all others, of our costs.

ROBERT G. ARDIS III
President and Chief Executive Officer

Help My House

ARE YOU LOOKING to improve your home's energy efficiency but need help knowing where to begin? Santee Electric's Help My House program is a great place to start. Help My House is a simple, affordable way to improve your home's energy efficiency and lower your energy bills. Help My House zero-down, low-interest loans cover things such as new heating and cooling systems (HVAC), adding insulation and sealing windows and doors.



The average member that has taken advantage of the Help My House program has saved roughly 25 percent on their electric bill per month.

SEC's energy expert will do a comprehensive audit of your home to see if you qualify for efficiency improvements. If you are eligible, we'll recommend a certified program contractor who can make the recommended efficiency improvements to your home. We can offer a zero-down, low-interest loan to finance improvements. A bonus is that Help My House loan payments can be made on your monthly electricity bill.

Visit santee.org/help-my-house or call (800) 922-1604 to learn more.

Scholarships available

SANTEE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE is committed to its core principle of Concern for Community. As part of this commitment, SEC has established two scholarship programs—Empower the Future scholarship (\$1,000) and Operation Round Up scholarship (\$2,500)—which aim to invest in the future of our communities by supporting their students.

SEC's scholarship programs are open to high school students living in a residence served by SEC and attending a high school in Clarendon, Georgetown, Florence, or Williamsburg counties. Both scholarship programs have the same eligibility requirements and application process, and only one application is needed to be considered for both. By supporting deserving students through these scholarships, SEC is helping to build a brighter future for the communities it serves. For the scholarship application visit santee.org/sec-schools.

\$500 Annual Meeting Scholarships

Santee Electric Cooperative will award eight \$500 scholarships to high school seniors at our Annual Meeting on April 16. Two awards each will be randomly drawn from applicants in Williamsburg, Clarendon, Georgetown and Florence counties. Please read the eligibility information and requirements before applying. Applications are due by 4:30 p.m., April 1.

Deadline:
April 1
Enter today!


Mail application to:
Joanna Arnsmeier
P.O. Box 548,
Kingstree, SC 29556

Requirements/ Eligibility

- Must be a high school senior.
- All blanks must be filled out or the application will be voided.
- The application must be signed on the spaces provided and turned in by the deadline of April 1, or it will be voided.
- Applicant must be a SEC member or a child or legal ward of a SEC member. Only one scholarship will be awarded per family per year.
- A student can only receive this scholarship one time. It's not renewable.
- The scholarship monies can be used by undergraduate students to attend, on a full-time basis, any university/college.
- Only high school seniors with a "C" average or better may apply.
- **Selected applicants will be required to provide SEC with an official transcript and acceptance letter to verify their eligibility.**



2024 Annual Meeting Scholarship Application

 Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

Member's relationship to Applicant (if last name is different please indicate reason) _____

SEC Account Number _____

GPA _____ University/College Attending _____

I have read and understand all of the above listed requirements for the SEC Annual Meeting Scholarship, and I agree to meet all of them. If I am selected as a recipient, I agree to allow SEC to use my name and/or photo in future promotions.

Applicant Signature _____ Date _____

Guardian Signature _____ Date _____