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SANTEE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE NEWS
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SANTEE ELECTRIC IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER AND EMPLOYER.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Which Santee is it?

HAVE YOU EVER been confused by the difference between your electric cooperative and Santee Cooper?

Perhaps you did not realize there is a difference? My goal for this month's column is to try to clear up some of the confusion.

First, the confusion is understandable. Both Santee Electric Cooperative and Santee Cooper were created in the 1930s as part of President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. Both provide electricity and serve ratepayers in Georgetown County. The "Santee" in both names refers to the Santee River. Finally, the "Cooper" in Santee Cooper's name looks and sounds a lot like the "Cooperative" in our name.

The differences are significant, though. Santee Cooper's official name is the South Carolina Public Service Authority. The name we commonly use comes from the initial project to dam the Santee River, divert the water into the Cooper River, create Lakes Marion and Moultrie and generate hydroelectric power. Today, Santee Cooper does much more than manage these two lakes and generate hydroelectric power. They also provide water service to hundreds of thousands of South Carolinians.

On the electric side, they serve more than 200,000 customers directly in Berkeley County and along the Grand Strand, manage a great deal of the state's bulk transmission system and provide approximately 75% of the wholesale power South Carolina's electric cooperatives distribute.

That is where your cooperative comes in. Like 19 other distribution electric cooperatives in South Carolina, Santee Electric Cooperative receives wholesale power at our substations—much of which is provided by Santee Cooper—and then distributes it throughout our assigned service territory.

Our task when we were created in the 1930s was to serve portions of Clarendon, Florence, Georgetown and Williamsburg counties that the investor-owned utilities (IOUs) deemed unprofitable due to lack of consumer density. In fact, until 1955, Santee Electric Cooperative purchased its wholesale power from one of those IOUs, Carolina Power and Light Company, now part of Duke Energy, before distributing it into the rural parts of our four counties. In 1955, Santee Electric Cooperative started buying wholesale power through Central Electric Power Cooperative, created and owned by SEC and other similar distribution co-ops, from Santee Cooper.

However, the confusion between the two organizations still exists, especially if you live in Georgetown County. If you live east of the Pee Dee River in Georgetown County (Debordieu, Pawleys Island, Litchfield, Murrells Inlet, etc.), your electric service comes from Santee Cooper. For the majority of the rest of the county's land mass (Pleasant Hill, Plantersville, Choppee, North Santee, Sampit and many other communities), your service comes from Santee Electric Cooperative. On top of that, Andrews is served by Duke and the City of Georgetown has its own electric department.

The relationship between the two "Santees" is strong. Our linemen work extremely well together to provide safe, reliable, affordable electricity. We also work extremely well together to promote economic development in the communities we serve. You could say that Santee Cooper and SEC grew up together and we have been working hard to improve South Carolinians' quality of life ever since.

ROBERT G. ARDIS III
 President and Chief Executive Officer

Safety comes first

IN MAY, Santee Electric's linemen participated in their yearly pole top rescue training. Pole top rescue training simulates an emergency our linemen could face—a fellow lineman losing consciousness at the top of the utility pole.

During the training exercise, linemen quickly strap on their equipment and climb a pole toward the limp “body,” actually a 150-pound dummy, hanging in the air. The linemen hook a rope to the dummy and lower it to the ground, all while keeping themselves secured, calm and safe.

Along with pole top rescue, our linemen practice bucket rescue as well. Lowering the bucket into position, they proceed to pull the dummy from the bottom of the bucket.

This safety training is a real reminder of what could be a tragic event. The dummy in the training scenario might be fake, but that doesn't mean our linemen don't take the exercise seriously. Such a risk can never be eliminated, even with all the training and money dedicated to our linemen's safety. So, they must be able to respond quickly and efficiently when one of their own is in need.

Being a lineworker is a dangerous job, so safety training is crucial. Our linemen are skilled in what they do because of their training and the hours of practice they do to become linemen. Going through these training sessions together also instills confidence in their team; they know that they have each other's backs, especially in the scariest situations.



PHOTOS BY JOANNA ARNSMEYER



▲ SEC lineman Clarence Pressley hoists the 150-dummy up from the bottom of the bucket during bucket rescue training.

◀ SEC line crew foreman Scott Lee hooks the rope to the dummy during pole top rescue training. Lineman Chad Miles helps from the bucket.

Bright Ideas grants available

TEACHERS IN Williamsburg, Georgetown, Clarendon and Florence counties—applications are now open for the Bright Ideas grant!

Bright Ideas grants are intended to fund projects outside normal school funding parameters and are available to all disciplines in grades K-12. A school may submit more than one application, but a teacher is limited to one application per school year. Grants are awarded for up to \$1,000 each.



For more information about the Bright Ideas grant program and the application, visit santee.org/bright-ideas. Completed applications are due by Monday, Sept. 25.

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