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**SANTEE ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE NEWS**
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FIND US ON



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Power bills are shrinking!



LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I am thrilled to report that electric rates from your cooperative have fallen significantly!

Today's residential energy rate has decreased nearly 9% since 2019 to the lowest charge per kilowatt-hour since

January 2017. Average residential power bills are down nearly 7% during that same period.

While it is true that the fixed charge—the smaller of the two components of your residential power bill—is \$1 per month higher than it was last year, that has been more than balanced out by a much lower energy charge (the big part of your bill). This increase in the fixed charge (from \$21 to \$22 per month) is necessary to minimize the amount that accounts with normal residential use subsidize those that only occasionally use electricity. Your cooperative's fixed costs are more than \$40 per residential consumer per month.

Again, though, I want to repeat—our average residential homeowner uses about 1,300 kilowatt-hours per month, and their bill is down nearly 7% today. So how did this happen?

Wholesale power

There is no question that the majority of SEC's costs (around 70%!) are from our wholesale power bill. The rate freeze from Santee Cooper (as a result of the Cook lawsuit settlement) has definitely helped, but this only began in the last year. Central Electric Power Cooperative, our wholesale supplier, has been

working diligently to lower the rates your cooperative pays for wholesale power for some time. This combination has made a large difference.

Employees

Your cooperative employs a great crew of dedicated and hardworking personnel. This team has worked extensively to reduce costs, work more efficiently and improve load factor so that we can provide you the best rates possible.

You

For those of you who have participated in our Beat the Peak program, thank you! If you have one of our H2O Select water heater switches or smart thermostats, thank you! If you use SmartHub to monitor your use and pay your bill, thank you! All of these initiatives save your cooperative—and, therefore, you—money. If you are doing this already, keep up the great work. If you have not tried it yet, please consider doing so.

Specifically, I want to urge all of you to look into SmartHub. It's a great way to view your power use on an hourly basis! Also, it's the easiest and cheapest way to pay your bill. It saves you stamps, time, gas, late penalties and, eventually, money on your power bill. When you help us operate more efficiently, you save.

Thanks for all you have done to help us save you money. Have a great month!

ROBERT G. ARDIS III

President and Chief Executive Officer



SEC employees and volunteers celebrate a job well done with co-op member Betty Sullivan.



PHOTOS BY MARY GRACE MCGEE

Marion Evans, Santee Electric's field services manager (left), with Santee Electric member, Betty Sullivan.

MNB Construction mulching most of the overgrowth. The construction company was able to do the work for the Trust Board at a significantly reduced fee, making the project feasible. Jimmie's

Tree Service was then able to get into the yard to cut and chip limbs from the large pine trees threatening the home. Next, an SEC line crew came in with a mini-excavator and a skid steer. This heavy equipment operated by our skilled linemen, Kelly McCracken and Chad Miles, made quick work of gathering the remaining debris.

Working around all the equipment were 14 other SEC employees who were raking, cutting vines and gathering bricks and trash. At one time, the yard was quite the nursery, evident in the long-forgotten water hoses and flowerpots.

CEO Rob Ardis, one of the volunteers, got the idea for Christmas in April after participating in similar community projects with his church.

"It absolutely thrills me when the employees get together to work on projects like these," says Ardis. "We always have tons of volunteers. You can really see how much our folks love working together and doing great things for our community."

Christmas came to one member in April

BETTY SULLIVAN WALKED around her yard in amazement as a crew of Santee Electric employees went to work clearing old flowerpots, vines and limbs on the morning of April 22. Over the years, her home had become overgrown with trees and vines, making all but the front of the house invisible. The Operation Round Up Trust Board chose Sullivan as the 2021 recipient of the Christmas in April project.

Work began at Sullivan's home earlier in the month with



Before Santee Electric's Operation Round Up moved in to clean Sullivan's yard, only the front of the house was visible.

► After the Christmas in April clean-up day April 22, Sullivan's backyard is clear.

