



Current Comments

MEMBER NEWSLETTER
SEPTEMBER 2022



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IMPORTANT DATES

Bright Ideas Application Deadline: Sept. 2

Teachers: apply online at southernriversenergy.com by midnight on Sept. 3 and you could receive up to \$1,000 to fund your creative lesson plan.

Labor Day: Sept. 5
SRE office will be closed.
To report an outage, call
1-866-244-4890.

Trust Board Meeting:
Sept. 14

**Barnesville Buggy Days
Festival:** Sept. 20-22
Visit barnesville.org for
a list of events, or call the
Barnesville-Lamar County
Chamber at 770-358-5884.



THE POWER OF PREPARATION

Southern Rivers Energy Encourages Members to Be Prepared Before Storms Hit

In honor of National Preparedness Month in September, Southern Rivers Energy (SRE) wants to remind members about the power of preparation. While you don't have to achieve a "doomsday prepper" level of preparedness, there are several practical steps you can take to keep you and your family safe.

Here are general guidelines recommended by the Federal Emergency Management Agency:

- Assemble a grab-and-go disaster kit. Include items like nonperishable food, water (1 gallon per person, per day), diapers, batteries, flashlights, prescription medications, first-aid kit, battery-powered radio and phone chargers.
- Develop a plan for communicating with family and friends.
- Have some extra cash available; during a power outage, electronic card readers and cash machines may not work.
- Store important documents (birth certificates, property deed, etc.) in safe place away from home.
- Keep neighbors and co-workers apprised of

your emergency plans.

- Fill your car with gas.
- Organize your supplies so they are together in an easily accessible location that family members know about.

Caring for Vulnerable Family Members

If you have older family members or those with special needs, make sure they have enough medication and supplies for a few days. If they don't live with you, arrange for a neighbor to check in on them. If a severe weather event is expected, consider having your relative stay with you if feasible. Otherwise, call them daily. If you have an infant or young children, make certain that you have ample formula, diapers, medication and other supplies on hand to weather an outage lasting several days or more.

We care about your safety. Planning for an emergency situation today can give you more confidence to deal with severe weather and potential outages in the future. Learn more about storm preparedness at southernriverenergy.com or ready.gov.



TIPS FOR A SAFE HARVEST

By Abby Berry

PHOTO SOURCE: BOB NICHOLS, USDA

Agriculture is the backbone of our country, and our livelihood greatly depends on the crops provided by American farmers. In addition to being one of the most labor-intensive professions, farming is considered one of the most dangerous jobs in the U.S.

The hard work and exhaustive labor are tough, but rushing the job to save time can be extremely dangerous—even deadly—when farming near electrical equipment.

Every year, we see collisions where tractors and other farming equipment accidentally collide with utility poles and power lines, causing injuries and power outages. These dangerous accidents can be avoided by looking up and around your surroundings when operating large farm machinery.

If you're preparing for harvest season, please keep the following safety tips in mind:

- Maintain a 10-foot clearance around all utility equipment in all directions.
- Use a spotter and deployed flags to maintain safe distances from power lines and other electrical equipment when working in the field.
- If your equipment makes contact with an energized or downed power line, call 911 immediately and remain inside the vehicle until the power line is de-energized. In case of smoke or fire, exit the cab by making a solid jump out of the cab (without touching it), and hop away to safety.
- Consider equipment and cargo extensions of your vehicle. Lumber, hay, tree limbs, irrigation pipes and

even bulk materials can conduct electricity, so keep them out of contact with electrical equipment.

National Farm Health and Safety Week is Sept. 19-25, but practicing safety on the farm year-round yields positive results. We hope you never find yourself in a situation where farming equipment contacts power lines or poles, but if you do, we hope you'll remember these safety tips.

Abby Berry writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56% of the nation's landscape.

A Faster Future Is Just a Few Clicks Away!

Fiber internet from Connect, powered by Southern Rivers Energy, will be a game changer for Southern Rivers Energy members.

Connect's high-speed, fiber internet services will allow you to:

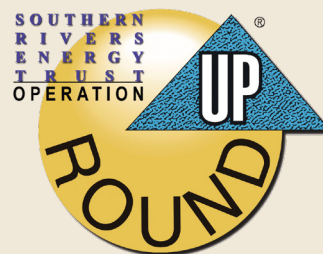
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Sign up now at conexonconnect.com or scan below!



Southern Rivers Energy's Operation Round Up

2022 Grant Recipient Snapshot



Southern Rivers Energy Trust Awards \$37,000 to Agencies Serving Local Residents

Since the beginning of the year, the Southern Rivers Energy (SRE) Trust has awarded \$37,375 in Operation Round Up grants to agencies and individuals in Bibb, Coweta, Crawford, Lamar, Meriwether, Monroe, Pike, Spalding and Upson counties.

The 9,694 participating Southern Rivers Energy members make Operation Round Up grants possible. Participants in the program have their monthly bill rounded up to the next dollar, with that surplus amount going to the SRE Trust. Since the program began in 2005, Operation Round Up has contributed more than \$1.54 million to local communities in SRE's service territory.

2022 ORU Grants (to date)

- **Individual grant:** \$4,071 for an adaptive therapeutic bike through Freedom Concepts for a local child with autism.
- **Lamar County Health Department:** \$5,804 funded a BINX IO machine to help local patients. Call 770-358-1483, ext. 4, to make an appointment.
- **Chattahoochee River Keeper:** \$2,000 funded a group of students from Unity Elementary School in Meriwether County to experience the West Point Lake Floating Classroom, which includes a variety of hands-on activities incorporating science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) subjects. Program scholarships like this one make it possible for thou-

sands of financially disadvantaged students from Title I schools and after-school and summer programs to participate. Learn more at chattahoochee.org.

- **Camp Kudzu:** \$5,000 provided an opportunity for children with Type 1 diabetes from SRE's service area to attend a one-week overnight summer camp. Camp Kudzu is a nonprofit serving children and teens living with Type 1 diabetes and supports more than 935 children, teens and families by providing camping experiences and educational opportunities at various camps in Georgia. Learn more at campkudzu.org.
- **American Red Cross, Central Midwest Chapter:** \$5,000 will support seven home fire victims in SRE's service area.
- **Windsor Academy:** \$5,000 to help build a livestock barn for the 4-H agriculture program. This project will support students of all grades through hands-on meaningful leadership opportunities and agriculture education.
- **Hope Tree Ministry of Barnesville:** \$4,000 to purchase food for the local food pantry. For questions or more information, call Hope Tree Ministry at 678-603-7268 or 678-972-2457.
- **Project Linus, Griffin Chapter:** \$1,500 for blanket-making materials.

Project Linus serves Spalding, Pike, Lamar, Henry, Upson, Butts and Fayette counties by providing new, handmade blankets to children in crisis through fire and police departments, hospitals, DFCS agencies and family shelters. For more information or to find out how to contribute, email project.linusgriffin@gmail.com.

- **Crawford County Family Connection:** \$5,000 to purchase school supplies and backpacks for the annual back-to-school bash. The event is open to all students in Crawford County and will be held Aug. 3. For more information, call 478-836-6051.

Get Involved

Individuals wishing to make a tax-deductible donation to the SRE Trust may contact customer service at 770-358-1383, complete an online form on the SRE website or make a check payable to Southern Rivers Energy Trust, P.O. Box 40, Barnesville, GA 30204.

Application Process

Any SRE member living in, or charitable organization serving at least one of the nine counties served by Southern Rivers Energy (Bibb, Coweta, Crawford, Lamar, Meriwether, Monroe, Pike, Spalding and Upson counties) may apply for an Operation Round Up grant by completing an application, available online at southernriversenergy.com.

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*Southern Rivers Energy is an equal
opportunity provider and employer.*



ROOFTOP SOLAR: TO ADD OR NOT TO ADD

If you've thought about adding solar as a home energy source, you've likely had an array of questions. As your local electric cooperative, Southern Rivers Energy (SRE) has answers.

When considering a rooftop solar system, it's important to know the facts regarding efficiency and energy savings—and whether solar will meet your needs, goals and financial objectives.

Typically, homeowners who install solar do so out of concern for the environment, to save money or both. It's important to know how rooftop solar at your home will impact these goals.

"If you are considering solar for any reason, it's important to contact SRE during the decision-making process," says Josh Hendricks, SRE's Energy Services Specialist. "We can answer questions about costs, possible savings and what kind of investment will best fit your electric needs."

While each home is different in terms of how much energy solar will provide, there are a few key factors to consider.

Energy Consumption

A solar system's size is based on the home's energy needs. Before installing solar, make sure your home is as energy-efficient as possible in terms of lighting, heating and cooling systems and insulation. An energy-efficient home will require a smaller solar system, which will save money and help reduce environmental impact.

Associated Costs and Maintenance

The age and orientation of your roof will affect your costs. The best

orientation for solar panels is facing south to receive direct sunlight; a shaded roof doesn't produce as much solar energy. Because it costs more to replace a roof on a home with solar panels, the age of your roof also should be considered. Will your roof need to be replaced before solar panels need to be replaced? Just as a shingled roof doesn't last forever, neither does a solar panel system, which has an average lifespan of 25 to 30 years. Also, as a solar system ages, it produces less energy and may require maintenance and repairs.

Your Access to Reliable Electricity

Solar panels only produce power when the sun is shining. To have power at your home at night or on cloudy days, you'll need to remain connected to a primary power source, such as SRE.

Signing a Solar Contract

Before you hire a solar contractor, contact SRE to learn about our solar offerings, rate structures and interconnection agreements. As with any major home-improvement project, get bids from three contractors to compare equipment and pricing when considering solar.

"SRE is always available to help in the process of obtaining the solar array that's right for you," Hendricks says. "Be sure to visit our website at southernriversenergy.com to review helpful resources to assist you in evaluating solar options."

If you are considering solar for any reason, it's important to contact Southern Rivers Energy during the decision-making process.

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