



**THE ENERGY EXPERT**

## Cut energy cost by reducing energy use

This time of year, Southern Pine Electric Power Association employees are often asked, "Why does my electric bill go up in the winter?" Even customers who do not have electric heat may see their electric bills rise in January and February, and they wonder why.

Simply put, electric bills are higher in winter because we use more electricity. But pinpointing just where the extra energy is being used can be difficult, because families are unique. Each household uses more or less electricity than the next due to differences in lifestyles and personal habits. Because we all take electricity for granted, we use it without giving it much thought. When the monthly bill comes, we often have used far more electricity than we expected and, consequently, the bill is higher than usual.

Southern Pine members, when discussing the increases in their bills, often examine their electrical use to determine why their bill might be higher during any one month. When the weather is cold, an electric heater might be the culprit (not to mention having to raise the thermostat). But the exact cause can be difficult to determine, especially since the bill may come weeks after electrical use increases.

Electricity is still one of today's best bargains. An average Southern Pine customer spends less than \$4.50 per day for

all the conveniences that electricity affords. And, according to the Department of Energy, Southern Pine's rates are among the lowest in the nation.

The important thing to remember is that you and your family can control your energy use—and reduce energy cost—by increasing your energy conservation awareness. Controlling the thermostat is one of the easiest and most economical ways to control energy use. We encourage you to read your meter often, so you can keep track of and understand your energy use.

Here are a few reasons your recent energy bill may be higher than usual:

- Because days are shorter in winter, we use more lighting, both indoors and out.
- We watch more TV in the winter.



**By Paul Myrick**  
Assistant Manager

- We use clothes dryers more in the winter; we're wearing heavier clothes and using heavier bedding, which take longer to dry.
- Many people use electric space heaters, electric blankets and heating pads to keep warm.
- Most heating systems require electric power in some way, and they run almost every day when it's cold outside.
- Have you added new electrical appliances or equipment to

your household? Computers, TVs, kitchen appliances—all of these add to your monthly kilowatt-hour use.

If you would like a free booklet with tips on energy use, visit or call the Southern Pine district office that serves you.

### Thanks for your support during outages

Southern Pine appreciates your patience, kindness and encouragement toward our workers during the recent outages. Heavy thunderstorms, strong winds and tornadoes caused widespread outages for much of our 11-county service territory.

We maintain more than 9,000 miles of power line, a big job even in the best of conditions. After storms like these, our employees put in a lot of old-fashioned hard work and long hours to make repairs to the lines safely and efficiently.

You can help by reporting a downed or damaged power line to your local Southern Pine office. And please keep others away from the line. A Southern Pine crew will correct the problem as quickly as possible.

## Expo seminars to update beef, poultry producers

Beef and poultry farmers will learn the latest production recommendations from state and regional experts during educational seminars and a trade show set for April 10 in Raleigh.

The Magnolia Beef and Poultry Expo will take place at the Smith County Ag Complex on Highway 35 South.

The trade show will open at 9 a.m. and will feature agricultural equipment for beef and poultry producers, pharmaceuticals for

cattle and other information.

Door prizes to be awarded during educational sessions include a brooder, cordless drill, mineral feeder and a tractor boom sprayer.

The free event is open to the public and sponsored by the Mississippi State University Extension Service and Community Bank of Raleigh.

For details, contact your local Extension office or Community Bank.



Visitors to the Magnolia Beef and Poultry Expo will be invited to inspect agricultural equipment for beef and poultry producers in a trade show to open at 9 a.m. The expo will be held April 10 in Raleigh at the Smith County Ag Complex.

## Southern Miss president named festival honoree

Dr. Martha Saunders, president of the University of Southern Mississippi, will be the festival honoree and parade grand marshal at the 19th annual Okatoma Festival, May 3 in Collins.

Saunders grew up in Hattiesburg and received her undergraduate degree at Southern Miss. She held academic positions at universities in Georgia, Florida and Wisconsin before becoming the ninth president of Southern Miss in 2007. She is the first woman to hold the office.

Saunders' mother, Vondell Dunagin, and sister, Diane Speed, are residents of Collins.

The festival theme is "Live and Learn on the Okatoma." Activities begin at 8 a.m.

with a 5K run/walk and 1-mile children's fun run, to be followed by a parade at 10:30 a.m.

Other festival events and attractions will include arts and crafts, art exhibit and sale, quilt exhibit, antique car show, children's park, softball tournaments, health fair, wood sculpture and canoe race.

Entertainment will feature a variety of music and fun for all ages.

The festival will conclude with a street dance from 6-10 p.m. with music by Cowboy Blues Band.

For booth space or festival information, contact the Covington County Chamber of Commerce at (601) 765-6012 or visit the Web site at [www.covingtonchamber.com](http://www.covingtonchamber.com).



**Dr. Martha Saunders**

### Powerful tips for paying your bill

- If you pay your Southern Pine bill in cash, please include your bill stub to ensure your account will be credited properly. If you do not have the bill stub or the account number, include the name as it appears on the account.
- If you use a night-deposit box at any Southern Pine office, please be sure to include your bill stub. If paying by money order, your name, address and account number should be printed plainly on the money order.

### SOUTHERN PINE BRIEFS

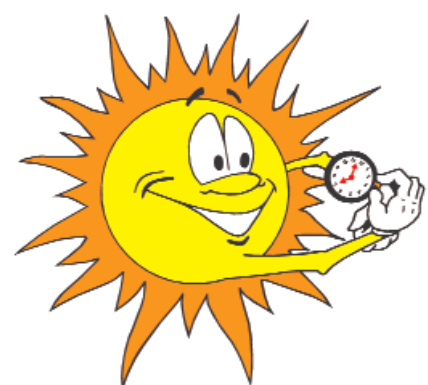
#### Try hassle-free bank drafts

A bank draft plan that automatically pays your electric bill from your bank account each month is available from Southern Pine.

The amount due on your electric bill will be withdrawn automatically from your bank account on the bill's due date. You will continue to receive a monthly bill, but it will be marked "pre-paid by bank draft" and is intended only for your records. There is no need to return the bill stub.

The bank draft plan is especially helpful for members who travel extensively; no more late bills to worry about! Get details at the Southern Pine office that serves you.

#### Get ready to 'spring forward'



Daylight-saving time begins Sunday, March 9, so don't forget to set your clocks ahead one hour before going to bed Saturday night.

In addition to resetting clocks on March 9, the National Fire Protection Association and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission recommend that consumers change the battery in smoke and carbon dioxide detectors.

Changing the batteries when daylight-saving time begins and ends helps ensure the detectors will be working in case of a fire.

## Clip and *SOUND OFF!*

Have a comment or suggestion concerning your electric service from Southern Pine Electric Power Association? We want to know! Tell us on this form, then mail it to Don Jordan, General Manager, Southern Pine Electric Power Association, P.O. Box 60, Taylorsville, MS 39168. Attach a separate sheet, if necessary.

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Please write your Southern Pine account number below. We appreciate your helping us serve you better. Southern Pine is a consumer-owned electric cooperative, dedicated to serving you reliably and safely.

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### Statement of nondiscrimination

Southern Pine Electric Power Association is the recipient of Federal financial assistance from the Rural Utilities Service, an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture, and is subject to the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, and the rules and regulations of the United States Department of Agriculture.

In accordance with Federal law and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, or disability. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)

The person responsible for coordinating this organization's nondiscrimination compliance efforts is Donald L. Jordan, General Manager. Any individual, or specific class of individuals, who feels that this organization has subjected them to discrimination, may obtain further information about the statutes and regulations listed above from and/or file a written complaint with this organization.

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call (202)720-5964 (VOICE OR TDD).

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Complaints must be filed within 180 days after the alleged discrimination. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible.

### Notice to members

Southern Pine Electric Power Association's dedicated employees take pride in providing quality service to members in a courteous and respectful manner.

However, we recognize that an employee could engage in behavior that we would neither authorize nor condone, and that may be objectionable to a member or other person.

Accordingly, if you ever believe a Southern Pine employee has treated you in an abusive, discourteous or disrespectful manner, subjected you to immoral or indecent conduct, or harassed you due to your gender, race, religion or national origin, you are encouraged to contact either Donald Jordan or Charlie Ware at 1-800-231-5240 or (601) 785-6511.