



Washington's handling of energy issues will affect you

By the time you read this, President Obama will have taken office and Congress may be working on legislative initiatives to address the economy and other issues.

We are watching very closely how the new administration and Congressional

PAYMENT OPTIONS

Bank drafts are hassle-free

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 The amount due on your electric bill will be withdrawn automatically from your bank account on the bill's due date.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.

Get details at your local district office.

Budget with leveled billing

Southern Pine's leveled payment plan, for residential members, allows bill payments of approximately the same amount each month. Your monthly payment is based on an average of your actual monthly power consumption for a one-year period.

To qualify, you must be a residential customer of tax-free status; your meter must have established at least 12 months of billing history at your current place of residence with no record of meter tampering, disconnects and returned checks during that period; and the meter for the account must be accessible to meter readers. Members dropped from the plan may reapply only after 12 months of good payment history.

Visit your district office

For your convenience, you may pay at drive-through windows in most Southern Pine offices. All Southern Pine offices have drop boxes for after-hours and weekend payments.

Visit Southern Pine at www.spepa.com

leaders address energy policy. For some time now we have been suggesting that our country needs to develop a comprehensive energy policy to address building new generating facilities, expanding the transmission grid, developing alternative resources, and maintaining the reliability and affordability of electric service. That is a huge task with many overlapping parts, and it all must be carefully considered.

Some say the use of coal is not necessary, as well as how renewable energy sources can somehow provide for all of our needs. There are still many opinions about nuclear facilities and their role in our energy future. All resources will play a role in our energy future, simply because the demand—especially for electricity—is so great.

Coal is our most abundant resource and currently produces half our electricity. It cannot be replaced anytime soon, but our industry is looking for ways to

improve its use.

Nuclear plants must be a part of the solution, as they are able to supply large amounts of electricity without emissions—but we must solve their spent-fuel issues.

Renewable sources, discussed in this issue's special power supply insert, can play a role but they cannot replace the facilities we now depend on to meet our needs. We must also continue to focus on energy efficiencies, which we help members with every day.

Without doubt, we will be seeing swift efforts to address our energy issues. It is important that all of our members understand the plans that are proposed and realize how they will affect our future. We will be following the debate very closely and will provide as much information as possible, as we have



By Don Jordan
General Manager

always done.

What can you do?

We are your advocates for reliable, affordable electric service, but we need your help to promote your interests in the national energy dialogue. We encourage you to get involved, understand the issues and form your own opinions.

If you are interested in receiving additional information, please check our Web

site and read your *Today in Mississippi*.

These debates have the potential to affect not only the reliability and affordability of electric service here in Mississippi, but our overall quality of life.

Southern Pine Electric Power Association is here to serve you, and we take that responsibility very seriously in this pivotal time.

Take control of your monthly power bill

The amount of electricity we used to stay warm on frigid days and nights in January will be reflected in this month's power bills. But remember, even when the temperature plummets in winter—or soars in summer—you are in full control of your use of power.

My job includes helping Southern Pine members in the Newton District find ways to improve their home's energy efficiency and pinpoint common energy wasters. Heating and cooling, for



example, account for about 50 percent of the average member's energy use. In very cold months, it can reach 75 percent. Obviously, anything you can do to reduce heating and cooling will lower your power bill.

Here are some tips that can help you:

- Learning to measure your daily energy use can be one of your most productive tools for reducing use. Reading your meter every 24 hours reveals how much

electricity you used in relation to weather conditions and daily activities. Subtract the current reading from the previous day's to determine your 24-hour energy use. It's helpful to keep a log of readings, so you can see how weather and household activities impacted your energy use during a billing period.

- We recommend a setting of 68 degrees for the electric furnace or heat pump. Raising the thermostat to 74 degrees can add roughly 40 percent to the cost of your electric bill.
- Clean and replace your system's air filters regularly.
- Inspect duct work regularly.



By Chad Lewis
Office Supervisor,
Newton District

Even when properly installed, ducts can develop air leaks.

- All areas underneath a mobile home should be properly sealed off from weather elements. Ductwork should be inspected for leakage regularly, especially when animals have access underneath the home.
- Windows and doors should be sealed to prevent cold air from entering.
- We recommend a water heater setting of 120-140 degrees. Your water heater should be located in a heated area; if this is not possible, we recommend adding an insulating blanket to the heater.



- Use cold instead of hot water for daily laundry.

You should also know:

- An electric furnace can use 2 to 3 times more energy than a heat pump.
- A 10,000-watt electric furnace is equal to 10 kilowatt-hours. That means running the furnace can cost roughly \$1 for one hour, \$12 for 12 hours. A month's use can add up to \$350 to your power bill.
- Using one 1500-watt heater for one hour consumes 1.5 kilowatt-hours. Using the heater for 12 hours daily for a month will add roughly \$55 to your power bill.
- Web sites such as www.accuweather.com can be useful when comparing your past month's bill to outside temperatures. Focus on the daily average temperature; when it is low and your thermostat is set at 68 degrees, your heating system will work much harder to maintain a constant temperature for your home.
- Southern Pine can help you take charge of energy costs with informative free brochures and online resources. Call or visit your local district office, or go to www.spepa.com.

Serviceman Bill Everett retires from 39-year career

Simpson County resident Bill Everett retires Feb. 4 after working more than 39 years to help "keep the lights on" for Southern Pine Electric Power Association members.

Everett, one of four servicemen working out of the association's New Hebron district office, joined Southern Pine's work force in June 1969. As a groundman on a line crew, Everett's main duty was to ensure his co-workers had the materials they needed to build, repair and maintain power lines.

Hurricane Camille tore through south Mississippi two months after Everett was hired. Working long hours to restore service in the wake of the storm, Everett quickly gained the knowledge and experience that would prepare him for a promotion to apprentice lineman.

As an apprentice lineman, Everett helped build, maintain and repair power lines serving residential, commercial and industrial meters. "And, of course, we did troubleshooting, too," he said.

Everett became a serviceman in April 1977. His duties included setting and disconnecting electric meters, collections and meter-tampering investigations. In addition, whenever an outage was reported in his service territory—day or night—Everett would set out to find the cause and restore service.

Power lines are vulnerable to damage from strong winds, falling trees, ice and lightning. But outages can have less obvious causes: "Snakes, raccoons—just a little of everything," Everett said, shaking his head. "I went to one pole five times because of lizards!"

Small animals can cause an outage when they crawl onto electrical equipment atop utility poles, he explained. The serviceman must pinpoint the cause of the outage as quickly as possible—a difficult challenge when the culprit is one tiny lizard amid miles of line.

"The cause of the trouble can be anywhere from the substation to the end of the line, maybe a distance of 10-15



Bill Everett retires this month after a long career devoted to helping ensure reliable electrical service for Southern Pine members.

miles," Everett said. "Our system is rural, so there's a lot of territory to cover—and it takes time."

Everett worked throughout Southern Pine's 11-county service territory before

he was assigned to the New Hebron office in 1993, when the association built district offices to become more accessible to members.

He looks forward to a retirement spent fishing, hunting and helping family members and neighbors on their farms. "I imagine I'll be doing an awful lot of honey-dos," he added.

Everett has a grandchild, Candice Leigh, 20, the daughter of his late son, Ronnie. She is a student at Copiah-Lincoln Community College. He also has a stepson, Randy, from a 39-year marriage to his first wife, Mary, who is deceased.

Everett has stepchildren, grandchildren and great-grandchildren with his wife, Peggy, whom he married last summer.

Southern Pine Electric Power Association appreciates the dedication Bill Everett brought to his job every day and wishes him a long and happy retirement.

Back to the Basics: Conserve101

Stop Blowing Your Money

Following simple tips around your home can help keep your energy costs down. From changing your air filters regularly to programming your thermostat, we make saving energy a breeze. Conserving today means saving tomorrow.

Fact: Central heating and cooling systems can account for more than half of your overall power costs.

Southern Pine Electric Power Association