




**Sussex Rural
Electric Cooperative, Inc.**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Currents

CONTENTS

P1 / Holiday Cheer


P2 / Efficiency Tip of the Month

P2 / Keep Food Safe

P3 / Holiday Card Art Contest

P4 / Supporting Students in 2023

Preventing Home Electrical Fires

 Fire departments respond to an average of **46,700** home fires each year caused by electrical failure or malfunction.

According to the National Fire Protection Association
Over a recent 4-year period...

30%

happened in cold weather months (Nov. – Feb.)

Fires caused
an estimated average of:
390 Deaths
1,070 Injuries

1

Wiring and related equipment were involved in the greatest number of home electrical fires.

Lighting, a lamp or a bulb was involved in the second largest number of fires.

2

WARNING SIGNS of electrical issues:

Damaged cords and flickering lights

Discolored outlets and switch plates

Frequently tripped circuit breakers or blown fuses

Hire a licensed contractor to ensure that your home's wiring is installed to code and functioning properly. Learn more at:

Safe Electricity.org

Source: NFPA's Electrical Fires Report, 2022



From our co-op family to yours,
wishing you a joyous holiday season
and a happy and peaceful New Year!

Holiday Cheer

By: Chris Reese, President & CEO
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2022 is wrapping up, and longtime members of Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative know what the end of the year brings with it. Besides gifts from Santa Claus, SREC members can also look forward to capital credit checks from their Co-op!

If you aren't familiar, capital credits are a unique benefit of cooperative membership. Any profits made by Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative each year are cataloged and eventually returned to our members in the form of a check. Checks for our upcoming capital credit retirement are going out this month and may come in handy as an extra bit of spending money for any last-minute presents.

This year, we will be retiring \$800,000 total – approximately \$413,000 from the year 2004 and \$387,000 from the year 2021. This means that if you were a member of Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative during either (or both) of these years, you can look forward to receiving a capital credit payment.

This money is our members' share of the profits from these specific years. As a not-for-profit utility, Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative returns any profits made during its operations to its members. Before these funds are officially "retired" to be returned to members, they are reinvested into our system. This helps cover costs and makes sure we have funds on hand to help cover weather-related disasters or other emergencies. Our board of directors meets each year to review the Co-op's financial standing and decides if it is prudent to retire capital credits.

Capital credits are a unique part of our business model that exemplifies "the Cooperative Difference." Unlike other electric utilities, we do not provide service to generate profits for investors. We are a not-for-profit utility that was formed by members of this community to serve this community. Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative is led by a board of directors made up of members like yourselves. The

>> CONT. PAGE TWO

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Our Board of Directors

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Barbara Miller	Thomas Madsen
Joseph Barca	Brad Sparta
Michael Abate	Karen McDougal
President & CEO	- Christopher P. Reese

Holiday Cheer

>> CONT. FROM PAGE ONE

money that comes from members through their bills covers the costs of providing electric service. Any margins made are invested back into the system that serves our community. Later on, these margins are returned to the members in proportion to the electricity they've used in their homes during the years in question.

For years, SREC has been consistently retiring capital credits to its members in December. In the last 10 years, we have given back over \$6.5 million to our members through capital credit retirements. Our hope is that each year's capital credit retirement helps spread some holiday cheer across our service territory. To take full advantage of this, please be sure to cash your check! Every year, we find that a sizeable percentage of members never cash their checks. This is YOUR money that was allocated back to you based on what you paid for electricity in the relevant years of your membership. Do not miss out on this chance at a bit of extra money in your pocket.

And of course, if you plan to move out of our service territory, please be sure to provide a forwarding address to us when you close your account. When you move, any capital credits you have with us are still reserved for you, but you will not receive this money if we don't know the right place to send it.

If you are set to receive a capital credit check this year, we hope that it brings with it a little bit of holiday cheer from your Co-op. We are truly grateful for you all and are honored to work for the benefit of our members and our community. On behalf of myself, our board of directors, and the entire Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative team, we wish you all a Merry Christmas, happy holidays, and a spectacular New Year!

Editor's Note: In the November *Currents* article "Is Solar Power Right For You?" we mistakenly described the typical weight of a rooftop solar system as "305 lbs. per square foot." This was a typo. The true weight is 3 - 5 lbs. per square foot. Our apologies for not catching this mistake prior to publication.

DON'T BE LEFT OUT IN THE COLD!

As we head into winter, make sure you don't fall behind on your electric bill.

There are resources available to help members of Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative who are struggling to pay their bills. You can find more information on these programs on our website.

 Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

www.sussexrec.com/assist



It's easier than ever to pay your bill!

Go to www.srecbillpay.com

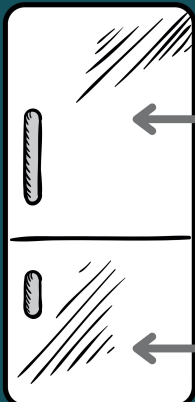


Pay Online Pay by Phone Pay by Text Schedule a Payment AutoPay (it's FREE when you use e-check) Paperless



Keep Food Safe During and After a Power Outage

Refrigerated or frozen foods may not be safe to eat after a power outage. Use these tips to minimize food loss and reduce risk of illness.



4

Refrigerated food will last four hours. After four hours, place refrigerated foods in a cooler with ice.

24 OR 48

Food in a half-full freezer will last 24 hours. Food in a full freezer will last 48 hours.

Food Safety Tips

1. Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible.
2. Throw out any food with an unusual odor, color or texture.
3. Throw out perishable food in your refrigerator after four hours without power or a cold source (like a cooler with ice).

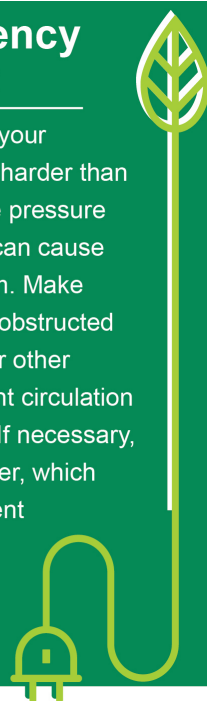
When in doubt, throw it out!



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Blocked air vents force your heating system to work harder than necessary and increase pressure in the ductwork, which can cause cracks and leaks to form. Make sure all air vents are unobstructed from furniture, drapes or other items to ensure sufficient circulation throughout your home. If necessary, purchase a vent extender, which can be placed over a vent to redirect air flow from underneath furniture.

Source: energy.gov



Holiday Card Art Contest

This year, SREC welcomed member students (grades K-5th) to design its SREC 2022 Holiday Card to be sent to friends and associates of the Co-op. We received a lot of fantastic art. Below is our winner and our two runners up!

Thank you to all who participated! We hope you have a great holiday season!



1st Place: Olivia Edsall from Lafayette



2nd Place: Hannah Bennett from Sussex



3rd Place: Olivia Wright from Branchville



Merry
Christmas
and
Happy
New Year



MEDICAL ALERT PROGRAM

Do you rely on electric-powered medical equipment?

Enroll in our Medical Alert Program to receive advance notice of planned outages.

www.sussexrec.com/medalert

Supporting Students in 2023

By: Steve Sokolowski, Marketing Associate
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Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative has been a force for good in our community for 85 years. Among our educational efforts to support our community's next generation of leaders, we offer programs that are specifically attuned to students in high school.

This of course includes Youth Tour, an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington D.C. that SREC participates in along with rural electric co-ops from around the country. By applying before the deadline of February 17, 2022, local high school juniors have the chance to explore our nation's capital, meet with their representatives, and learn about their role in our system. Youth Tour participation also allows students to become eligible for certain scholarships in our catalogue of scholarships and awards.

Our scholarships and awards are available to local high school seniors who live in homes powered by SREC. We have several options available to eligible students, funded either through unclaimed capital credit monies that would have been escheated to the State or through our statewide and national associations. Below are the SREC-funded awards:

- **The James Howard Goodwin Scholarship** - Provided by SREC to students seeking a college education after graduation. SREC offers up to three \$2,000 scholarships each year. Applications are currently open with a due date of March 7, 2023.
- **The SREC Trade School/Certification Scholarship** - Provided by SREC to students pursuing a trade school or certification program after graduation. SREC offers up to two \$2,000 scholarships each year. Applications are currently open with a due date of March 7, 2023.
- **The Ray Cordts Community Champion Award - NEW in 2023:** Provided by SREC to students who have demonstrated a commitment to working for the benefit of their community or their school. Pursuit of a college degree or certification after graduation is NOT required to receive this award. Each year, up to two students may receive this award. Selected students will receive a \$500 award with an additional donation of \$500 in their name going to an organization of their choice. Applications are currently open with a due date of March 7, 2023.

SREC member students are also eligible to apply for three scholarships offered through our statewide and national associations. The William F. Matson Scholarship from PREA offers a minimum of five \$1,000 scholarships offered each year to co-op member students from NJ or PA. The Jody Loudenslager Scholarship from PREA offers two \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded yearly to Youth Tour alumni from NJ or PA. And the Glenn English Foundation Scholarship from NRECA offers four \$1,000 scholarships and one \$10,000 will be awarded yearly to Youth Tour alumni from across the country. Applications for these scholarships are not yet available, but you can find more information on each of them at www.sussexrec.com/scholarships.

If you have a child who is a junior or senior in high school, please be sure to share these great opportunities with them! Your Co-op exists for the benefit of its members, and we hope that our programs can contribute to the success of the young people in our communities. Stay mindful of the application deadlines for each opportunity to make sure you don't miss your chance to apply!

Washington, D.C. Youth Tour

LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL JUNIORS:

If your home is powered by Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative, you can apply for the trip of a lifetime: an all-expense paid trip to our nation's capital! Applications are due **February 17, 2023!**
www.njyouthtour.com

