



*Pictured: An SREC  
right-of-way in Vernon, NJ*



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**Sussex Rural  
Electric Cooperative, Inc.**  
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

SREC's Member Newsletter  
Volume 1, Issue 1

# Currents

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## Welcome to the New *Currents*

It is my pleasure to officially welcome you to the new version of *Currents*! This project has been a long time in the making, but I am proud to present this update of our longtime newsletter to ALL of our members. No matter how you receive your bill, the new-and-improved *Currents* will be hitting your mailbox four times per year.

With this distribution change comes content changes as well. Our new eight-page format allows us to expand on what we'd usually include in *Currents*. This includes recurring sections like a Pluggy the Pug activity for kids plus more varied articles and insights. We hope that *Currents* will have something for everyone.

You can expect three more issues to be sent to you this year. A copy of *Currents* will be sent to each of our members

By Chris Reese  
[contactthecoe@sussexrec.com](mailto:contactthecoe@sussexrec.com)



whether they receive physical bills, are enrolled in paperless billing, or use auto pay. Please make sure to keep your preferred mailing address updated with your Co-op. This will ensure that *Currents* (as well as any capital credit checks) will always be able to reach you! You can give us an update on your best mailing address by writing in to [customerservice@sussexrec.com](mailto:customerservice@sussexrec.com).

I hope you enjoy this first issue of the new version of *Currents*! We look forward to sharing more with you in the rest of this year's issues. Be sure to follow us on Facebook (@sussexrec) and Twitter (@SussexREC) for any pressing updates between issues!

# Lineworker Appreciation

By Claudia Raffay  
craffay@sussexrec.com

Monday, April 10th is Lineworker Appreciation Day. Each year on the second Monday of April, rural electric cooperatives across the country celebrate the contributions, hard work, and sacrifices of the lineworkers who perform the difficult task of keeping power flowing for millions of people.

Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative is extremely proud of our fantastic team of linemen. What does it take to be a lineworker? A sense of duty. Grit. Perseverance. Strength, both mental and physical. Comradery. The ability to jump out of bed and get to work, no matter the time or weather. And also coffee. Lots and lots of coffee...

## Lineworker Appreciation Day is Monday, April 10<sup>th</sup>!

**If you know a lineworker, be sure to thank them for everything they do to empower their communities!**

In honor of the linemen who work day or night, be it sunny or snowy or storming, whether it's a weekday or a weekend or a holiday, to keep the people of our community powered on: we say thank you. Thank you for the time and effort you've given to help others. Thank you for lending your talents to repair, upgrade, and expand Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative's system.

And most importantly, to each and every one of our linemen: Kevin B., Chantz, Kyle, Jeff E., Brian, John, Jake, Fred, Scott, Travis M., Tom, Travis P., Jeff R., Pete, Tony, Mike, and Kevin T.—thank you for being you!



## ELECTRICAL LINWORKERS

Lineworkers install and maintain overhead and underground electrical systems. We rely on their expertise to power our world.

They must commit to safety above all else for the benefit of those they serve (you!), fellow crew members and themselves.

## WHAT THEY WEAR

Protective clothing is required to shield lineworkers since they work around high voltages. Gear can vary depending on pole structure (wood or steel) and weighs up to 45 pounds.





# Reliability Crisis

By Steve Sokolowski  
ssokolowski@sussexrec.com

Today, many young people are facing a crisis of confidence in the world around them - a sense of uncertainty about the future that we and our children will live in. The reliable facets of life from previous generations don't seem so reliable anymore, especially when the effects of global climate change are factored in.

Whether you believe in manmade climate change or not, there are real and measurable changes that have taken place over recent decades in the Earth's climate and weather patterns, and I think it would be valuable for me to share my perspective as a young adult working in the energy field. I am all too familiar with this sense of uncertainty felt by many in my age group and younger. Since joining Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative in 2018, I have learned a lot about the multiple aspects of this issue that aren't commonly considered.

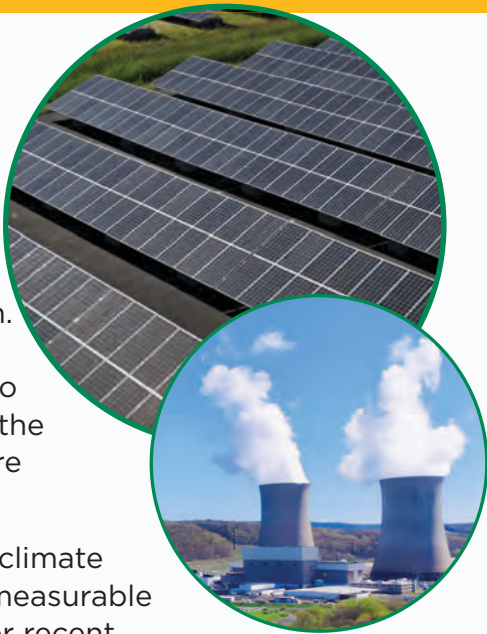
Some of the advancements in renewable energy generation over recent decades have been astounding which has given many people hope that fossil fuels can be completely replaced with renewable power. In a perfect world I would love to see this happen, but we are held back by the material conditions of our all-too-imperfect world.

Utilities' power mixes are selected to ensure the greatest reliability possible. Reliability is key to stability. A lack of reliable power can cause frequent blackouts that would leave many of us, especially in underserved areas, cut off from the necessities of modern life.

Solar power and wind power certainly will hold an important place in the future of our world's energy mix, but they also take up a lot of physical space and can only operate at full potential in certain locations. They are also intermittent sources of power, meaning that if the sun isn't shining or the wind isn't blowing, these technologies will not be able to generate the power needed to meet demand.

In addition, there is no "carbon neutral" method of producing green technologies or recycling them. The manufacturing process for solar panels and wind turbines, along with electric vehicles, involves mining for materials and factory production which mostly takes place in parts of the world that uses electricity generated through coal or gas. All of these technologies offer ways to reduce your own carbon impact, but they have a "hidden footprint" that

>> Continued on page 4 & 5



## 10 Do's & Dont's When Using Portable Generators

If you're planning to use a portable generator in the event of an outage, Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative wants to remind you to play it safe.

With proper use and maintenance, portable generators can provide great convenience during an outage. However, when generators are used incorrectly, they can be extremely hazardous. In a 2022 report, the Consumer Product Safety Commission estimated 85 U.S. consumers die every year from carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning caused by gasoline-powered portable generators.

Here are 10 do's and don'ts to keep in mind when using portable generators:

- 1. **DO:** Install backup CO alarms.
- 2. **DO:** Keep children and pets away from portable generators at all times.
- 3. **DO:** Position generators at least 25 feet outside the home, away from doors, windows and vents that can allow CO to enter the home.
- 4. **DO:** Ensure your generator is properly grounded. Use a portable ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) to prevent electric shock injuries.
- 5. **DO:** Use three-pronged extension

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Tell us what you Think  
**Take the Survey**



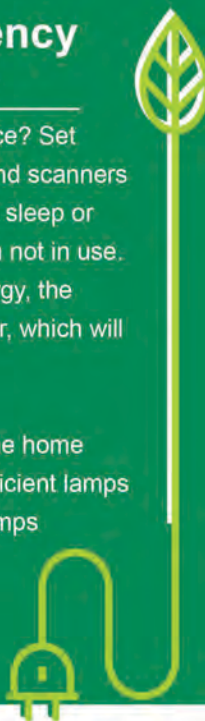
[www.sussexrec.com/surveys](http://www.sussexrec.com/surveys)



## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Do you have a home office? Set equipment like printers and scanners to automatically switch to sleep or energy-saver mode when not in use. In addition to saving energy, the equipment will stay cooler, which will help extend its life.

Another way to save in the home office is to use energy efficient lamps for task lighting. Small lamps use less energy than whole-room lighting.



## Currents

The quarterly newsletter of  
Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative  
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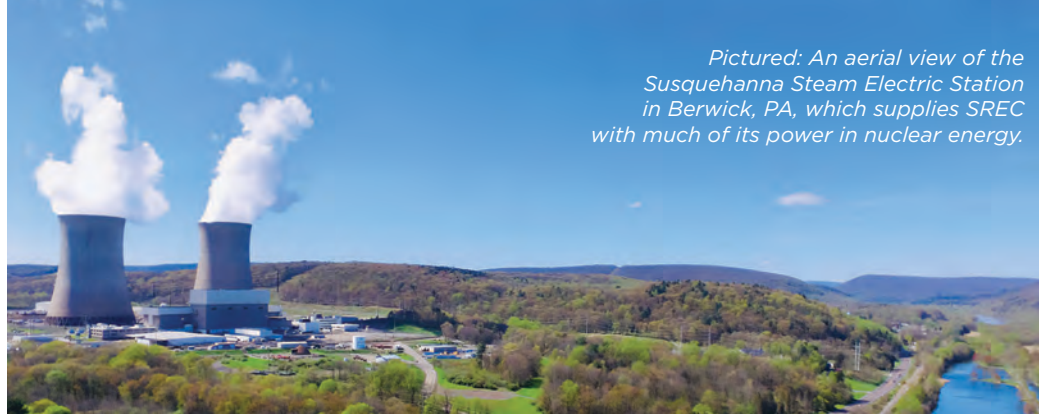
**Sussex Rural  
Electric Cooperative, Inc.**

**President & CEO** - Christopher P. Reese

### Our Board of Directors

<b>Chairman</b>	- Jack Haggerty, Jr.
<b>Vice Chairman</b>	- William Kovach
<b>Sec./Treasurer</b>	- Ronald Dupont
Thomas Madsen	Barbara Miller
Brad Sparta	Joseph Barca
Michael Abate	Karen McDougal

*Pictured: An aerial view of the  
Susquehanna Steam Electric Station  
in Berwick, PA, which supplies SREC  
with much of its power in nuclear energy.*



## Reliability Crisis *(continued from page 3)*

many of us don't consider.

So we find ourselves in a tough situation. Extreme weather events are occurring at an increasing frequency, which strains existing electric infrastructure. At this same time, electric demand is only going up – made worse by extreme temperatures that drive up heating and cooling costs. What can be done about this if we phase out reliable, but harmful, fossil fuels in favor of imperfect, but less harmful, renewable energy sources? Even though the US is the second highest carbon producing country in the world, we share one atmosphere with every other nation. Hasty policy decisions on energy may end up hurting our citizens more than they can ever contribute to solving the climate crisis.

I have offered enough doom and gloom for one article. As someone who cares about environmental justice, I am not here to say that green technologies should not be developed and become a larger part of our grid. But I must go with the word of energy experts who urge us to be realistic in the timing of the changes we make. Sustainability must always be balanced with reliability or else our surprisingly delicate electric grid will not be able to power the millions of people who rely on electricity for their basic needs.

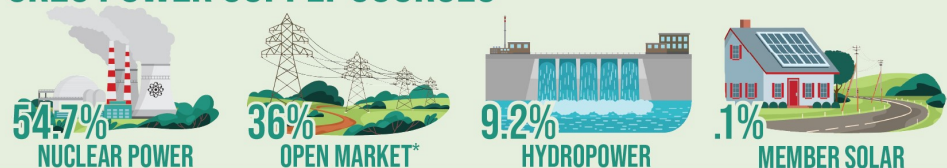
I believe that electric co-ops, like SREC, are uniquely poised to take an objective stance on this issue. Unlike investor-owned utilities that have profits on the line when changes like these are made, co-ops are not-for-profit and are solely focused on how to best serve the needs of their members. This includes a focus on maintaining and upgrading their systems and staying in-the-know about new technologies.

One way that SREC ensures reliability for your power is through our diverse power mix. SREC makes use of some natural gas and coal

## A Reliable Power Mix - Priority #1

### SREC POWER SUPPLY SOURCES

\*OPEN MARKET IS A MIX OF NUCLEAR, RENEWABLES,  
NATURAL GAS, AND/OR OTHER SOURCES

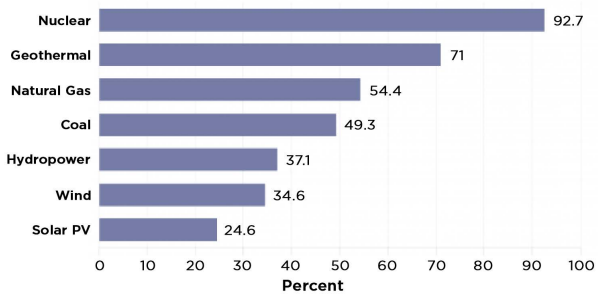


*Pictured: Summary of Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative's power mix in 2022*



## What is Capacity Factor?

### U.S. Capacity Factor by Energy Source - 2021



Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration

means that on average, U.S. nuclear power plants were able to operate at full output 92.7% of the time. Power sources with higher capacity factors are able to provide more consistent and reliable power, while those with lower capacity factors tend to be intermittent sources of power generation, such as solar and wind.

power through the energy it purchases from the open market. But overall, we have a nearly 80% carbon-free, and still reliable, power mix. This is achieved through hydroelectric power obtained from the Raystown Hydroelectric Plant and Niagara Power Project and nuclear power from the Susquehanna Steam Electric Station (which provides the majority of our electricity), plus additional nuclear and hydropower from the open market.

While nuclear power's reputation is not as strong as solar or wind, proper maintenance of nuclear power plants lets them operate safely to the point that there has not been a major incident in a US nuclear power plant since Three Mile Island in 1979. It is also the cleanest form of energy we have (being a carbon-free source) and is much more productive than others. Nuclear power's capacity factor is much higher than other forms of energy production, especially when compared to other carbon-free sources (see the above chart).

Our government is looking for ways to decarbonize, but we are seeing many nuclear power plants across the country shut down despite the clean energy that nuclear power provides. The simplest solution is often the best. Nuclear power, when used in conjunction with other energy sources, can take care of our reliability problem and give time for other energy alternatives to better develop. There will still be a future. We just need to make sure we build it in a smart way that is most beneficial to all of us.

Reliability is key. As NRECA CEO Jim Matheson said in his address before the U.S. Energy Association's State of the Energy Industry Forum, "We talk about all of the change in the energy industry, but I'll tell you something that hasn't changed for us—job one is keeping the lights on. I fear that people in the policy world are not recognizing the importance of reliability."

SREC ensures reliability with its diverse power mix that takes advantage of nuclear and hydropower's capacity for productive power. With these two sources, plus additional nuclear and hydro power from the open market, SREC is almost 80% carbon free!

A power source's "Capacity Factor" is the measurement of how often a plant can run at maximum output. This is a primary measure of reliability.

This chart from the U.S. Energy Information Administration shows that in 2021, nuclear power had a capacity factor of 92.7%. This

## 10 Do's & Dont's

<< Continued from page 3

cords that are rated to handle the load of the generator. Inspect extension cords for cuts, frays, or other damage before use.

**6. DON'T:** Operate a generator inside your home or an enclosed (or partially-enclosed) space. Generators produce high levels of CO, which can be deadly.

**7. DON'T:** Open windows or doors while the generator is running.

**8. DON'T:** Rely on generators as a full-time source of power. They should only be used temporarily or in emergency situations to power essential equipment or appliances.

**9. DON'T:** Overload generators. They should only be used to power essential equipment. Make sure your generator can handle the load of the items you plan to power.

**10. DON'T:** Connect generators directly into household wiring unless you have an appropriate transfer switch, such as a GenerLink, installed. If a generator is connected to a home's wiring without a transfer switch, power can backfeed along power lines and electrocute utility lineworkers making repairs.

While generators provide convenience during power outages, they can quickly become hazardous—even deadly—if improperly operated. Before you operate a portable generator, be sure to thoroughly read the owner's manual for important safety information and tips.

If you have questions about proper use of portable generators, we're here to help. Give us a call at 973-875-5101 or contact us at [info@sussexrec.com](mailto:info@sussexrec.com).





# Your Directors for Re-election

*SREC's service area is split into three districts with three directors per district. Each director, who must be a member of the Cooperative, serves a three-year term with 1/3 of the directors standing for re-election each year. This year's candidates are listed below. Elections of board members are held by mail-in ballots as required in our Bylaws. Ballots will be sent to members in mid-May and results will be announced as part of our Online Meeting on Monday, June 5th.*



## **District 1 - Jack Haggerty, Jr.**

**[jhaggerty@sussexrec.com](mailto:jhaggerty@sussexrec.com)**

Currently serving as Chairman of the Board, Jack has been re-nominated to serve District One. A member of the Cooperative since 1974, he is marking his 42nd year on the co-op's Board and is an ex-officio member of all the Board's committees. Jack is a credentialed NRECA Director and has achieved his Leadership certificate and Director Gold Status Certificate. Jack serves as Sussex REC's representative on the Allegheny Electric Cooperative Board of Directors and serves on the Power Supply Committee. He also serves as chairman of Sussex REC's subsidiary, SREC Resources.

A graduate of Clarkson University, Jack is a member of the Institute of Industrial and Systems Engineers. He served six years with the N.J. National Guard and also served as an elder and president of the board of trustees for the First Presbyterian Church of Sussex.

Before retiring, Jack worked as an Engineer and Manager at Ames Rubber, as a Process Engineer for Laird Technologies, and as a Sales Engineer and Quality Engineer for Ja-Bar Silicone. Jack currently serves on the Sussex Kiwanis and as a trustee on the Old Clove Church Preservation Committee. He and his wife, Sharon, reside in Wantage. They have two sons and three grandchildren.



## **District 2 - William Kovach**

**[wkovach@sussexrec.com](mailto:wkovach@sussexrec.com)**

Currently serving as Vice Chairman of the Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative Board and the SREC Resources Board of Directors, Bill has been re-nominated to represent District Two. As a member of the Cooperative since 1992, Bill has served on the Board for 22 years and, like the Chairman of the Board, he is an ex-officio member of all the Board's committees. He is a credentialed National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Director and has achieved his Leadership Certificate and Director Gold Status Certificate.

Bill graduated with a B.A. in Accounting and an M.B.A. from William Paterson University. He is Vice President and CFO of Ames Rubber Corporation in Hamburg, NJ. In addition to these duties, he is a member of the Ames Board of Directors as Secretary/Treasurer.

A member of the Institute of Management Accountants, Bill has also served on the United Way board for many years and continues to volunteer and support community programs. He and his wife Helen reside in Vernon, NJ.



## **District 3 - Karen McDougal**


**[kmcdougal@sussexrec.com](mailto:kmcdougal@sussexrec.com)**

Karen McDougal was appointed to Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative's Board of Directors in 2022 and has been re-nominated to serve District Three. Karen serves as a Vice President with Lakeland Bank and has been an essential piece in the success of the branches she oversees as area manager. She possesses 45 years of banking experience in all aspects and focuses on fraud prevention, budgeting, compliance with financial regulations, and sales. Her roles with Lakeland Bank also require performance appraisals, scheduling, hiring, and disciplinary action.

Karen is well known in the community and provides notary services locally. She is involved with numerous non-profit organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, Project Self Sufficiency, and Norwescap. She is also an active member of the Wallkill Valley Rotary Club, Sussex Kiwanis, Sussex County Chamber of Commerce, Franklin/Hardyston Chamber Council, and Sussex/Wantage Chamber Council.

Karen and her husband, Daniel, live in Lafayette and have been members of Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative since 1986. They have been ETS owners since the early years of the program and updated their ETS system in 2017. They are also involved in the Sussex Solar Garden community solar project.





# KIDS' CORNER

## with Pluggy the Pug

For Lineworker Appreciation Day, we're thanking lineworkers for the important work they do to make sure we have electricity! If you watch TV, play video games, or use lights, you use electricity brought to you by lineworkers.

Included here is a postcard where you can write a note to your local lineworkers. When you're done, ask an adult to help you send it to us to share with our crews!

# WE ♥ OUR LINEWORKERS

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From: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_



**Send your note to the mailing address below, or snap a photo with your phone and email it to us!**

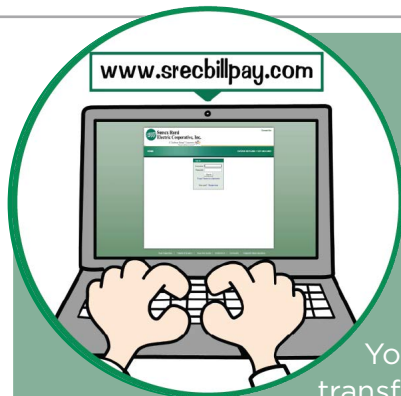
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Sussex, NJ 07461



**Sussex Rural  
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Email your note to us at: [info@sussexrec.com](mailto:info@sussexrec.com)

Find more Pluggy activities online!



## Easy Ways to Pay Your Bill

With SREC, there are many ways you can pay your bill!

When you receive your bill, you can mail a check or drop it off at our office. You can pay at our office during business hours (8 am – 4:30 pm, Monday – Friday). If you're coming by after hours, you can deposit your payment through our outdoor payment drop box.

You are also able to make a payment over the phone. If you call our office, we can transfer you to our over-the-phone payment system. We accept payments by credit card, but please note that there is a 3.5% (\$1.95 minimum) convenience fee charged by the credit card merchants that will apply to any card payments. You can also pay with your checking account with no fee!

We offer online bill payment at [www.srecbillpay.com](http://www.srecbillpay.com), with several quick and convenient options that members can take advantage of. Once you set up your account, you can use our billing website to pay your bill, view your usage data and account activity, and change your billing preferences. These options include:

- **Scheduled Payments** – You may select an upcoming date for your payment to be posted.
- **Paperless Billing** – You will be enrolled to receive email notifications about your bills instead of physical bills by mail.
- **Auto Pay** – Each month, your balance is securely deducted from your bank account when your bill is due, with no fees or additional charges.
- **Pay by Text** – You will be enrolled to receive text alerts prompting you to pay your bill.

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# IN THIS ISSUE OF *Currents*



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**\*THE FIRST EDITION OF THE NEW *CURRENTS*\***

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- **Reliability Crisis**
- **10 Do's & Don'ts for Portable Generators**
- **Your Directors for Re-election**
- **Pluggy's Kids' Corner**
- **Easy Ways to Pay Your Bill**

## Easy Ways to Pay Your Bill

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Please note that convenience fees will apply to any online payments by credit card, but all options using e-check/checking account will be fee-free. **www.srecbillpay.com** can be accessed for secure payment on desktop or mobile devices.

If you want to make an online payment without signing in to your account, you can use our new Quick Pay feature! On either desktop or mobile, hit the "Quick Pay" button on any page of

**www.sussexrec.com** to visit our Quick Pay platform. You can make a secure payment to your account using Visa, MasterCard, American Express, Discover, Google Pay, PayPal, or fee-free e-check!

We are offering more options than ever so you can pay your bill your way! If you ever have questions about your bill, how to pay, or payment assistance options, you can contact us at **billing@sussexrec.com!**

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you use e-check)*



**Paperless**



**VISA**



We hope that you enjoyed this first new issue of *Currents*! We are looking forward to sharing more stories, information, and activities with you all in the coming issues. If you have any suggestions for energy or co-op related topics you would like to learn more about, please share it with us at [currents@sussexrec.com](mailto:currents@sussexrec.com).



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