



**Sussex Rural
Electric Cooperative, Inc.**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



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Currents

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September 2019 www.sussexrec.com



Back to School!

It's a new school year and kids of all ages are getting ready for a fresh year of learning! (I put an exclamation there because this column is for parents, and this sentence translates to "the kids are finally out of the house!")

From kindergarten through college, students attend school to gain knowledge about a broad variety of subjects and learn new skills that will prepare them for the future. In a similar vein, Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative is continually learning, without the summer breaks, in order

to advance technology that improves electric service, reliability, and safety which enhances the quality of life for the members we serve across the area.

One of Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative's core values is a commitment to education, training, and information. We put this into practice by regularly providing our employees with opportunities for training and skill development.

Whether it's providing our linemen with exercises such as transformer

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school or pole-top rescue simulations, training our Member Services team to use upgraded software, or keeping in contact with other co-ops across the country to share information on programs and services, we are always promoting active learning among our employees. All this helps us continue to live up to our mission:

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Back to School!

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providing the highest quality of service at the lowest possible cost.

To further meet this goal, it's critical that SREC keeps abreast of industry trends. The energy sector is rapidly changing, and innovations in technology and energy types are fueling demand for more options. On the consumer front, people are looking for more ways to manage their energy use with smart technologies. Consumers expect more convenient payment methods – whether automatic, online, or in person. SREC accepts all of these options, as well as payment over the phone, by mail, and through a night drop at our office.



Technology Improves Operational Efficiency

Through recent years, Sussex Rural Electric has leveraged new technology to help further our mission. For example, automated meter reading (AMR) is the technology of automatically collecting energy consumption data and transferring it from the electric meter to the Co-op. Because this information can be collected remotely, it enhances our system's efficiency, helps control costs, improves work processes, and enables two-way communication between utilities and consumers. In the event of an outage, it helps to distinguish between issues that impact a single home, a large scale area, and ones that can cause multiple outages across our service territory.

This is critical because resolving each type of issue is a very different process. This two-way communication is a means to verify that power has been restored after an outage. However, one of the biggest benefits from improved technologies, especially when addressing outages caused by extreme weather, is pinpointing the outage location, which helps to reduce risk for crews out on the road.

While AMR technology can help with this, when it comes to pinpointing the location of an outage it's best to gather information from as many sources as possible, especially as we move into the Fall. Just as the temperature begins to cool and the leaves start to change color, we'll also have to deal with tree limbs potentially

falling onto power lines and squirrels traveling across them. If you experience an outage, please report it to us at our 24/7/365 outage and emergency phone number, 877-504-6463. Reports from our members help us learn the scope of the issue which can be substantiated by data from our meters.

In addition to this essential information during major outages, Sussex Rural Electric analyzes AMR data for anomalies including faults, damaged meters, or energy theft. Detecting these problems early helps our Cooperative save money and improve reliability for the whole community.

Improving Reliability

Reliability is key in providing electric service. To limit interruptions and ensure that a consistent stream of power reaches all of our members, we put a lot of resources into improving and upgrading our system.

For example, if you live on or around Sally Harden Road in Wantage, you may have seen our crews working there over the last few months. This is one location where we're focused on improving reliability for our membership. Approximately 1 mile of conductor is being upgraded to a larger size with more carrying capacity to match the size of the surrounding conductor. This circuit travels along Sally Harden Road and feeds into upper Wantage and Greenville, NY. While this circuit has not caused us any major issues, we still find it important to invest in upgrading it to avoid potential problems that could come from having a weak link in a circuit that serves such a large number of members.

This has been a lengthy project, but one that is well worth it to ensure our membership receives the absolute best quality of service. It's just like doing your homework – if you're willing to put the time and effort in, great results can come of it.

Whether it's examining ways we can improve reliability or exploring how emerging technologies can better serve our members, Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative's "school year" is never over. We will continue to learn from our members about their priorities for the future, and we will continue to study and research the issues so that we can better serve you, now and in the coming years.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Chris'.

The System Connection Fee

By: Steve Sokolowski, Marketing Associate
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When reviewing a Sussex Rural Electric bill for a month's energy use, there are three main fees that every member is charged. These are the Energy Charge, which varies per member based on the energy (kilowatthours, or kWh) used, the Power Cost Adjustment, also based on kWh, and the Facilities Charge. This is a flat fee that does not change month-to-month and is not tied to a member's electric usage.

From this point onward, the Facilities Charge will be renamed "the System Connection Fee." We feel the name of this fee better describes what the fee is actually for. Given this change and the occasional questions we receive about this component of the bill, we felt it best to take this opportunity to explain what it is and why it exists. PLEASE NOTE: This is a change in name only, not in the amount of the charge.

As most members are aware, SREC is a not-for-profit electric utility. We are funded by you, our members, who invest equitably in the Co-op to receive electric power from us. We operate on an at-cost basis, only charging what we need to purchase electricity and deliver it to your home, returning any profits back to our members over time, through capital credit retirements.

So what is the System Connection Fee? To put it in the simplest terms – this is the cost to be connected to Sussex Rural's grid so that you have the ability to bring electricity into your home, at all times. We use the revenue from this fee to cover the expenses of maintaining and improving our power system so that we can continue to provide the highest possible quality and availability of electric service. Examples of these expenses and investments include:

- Wire, transformers, utility poles, and other power line equipment
- Costs of labor needed to build and maintain the electric distribution system
- Right-of-way tree trimming
- System improvements and outage restoration costs
- Liability insurance, interest, and taxes

These costs will exist no matter how much electricity any of our members use, so the best way to recover those costs is to spread them across all of our members' bills, regardless of individual monthly kWh use. Note that the fee does vary between residential and commercial accounts. You can think of the System Connection Fee as your cost to be connected to your Cooperative's lines – whether you use a little or a lot of power. If a tree falls and breaks a wire, pole, or both, it costs the same for us to fix whether the houses affected by the outage used 100 or 10,000 kWh that month.

The Energy Charge covers the cost for the Cooperative to purchase power from our power supplier, Allegheny Electric Cooperative. This charge is based on how much electricity you use each month, which correlates collectively to how much power we have to purchase each month. The Power Cost Adjustment is exactly as it sounds. It is a charge, or a credit, based on our budgeted system power costs adjusted to the actual true costs we paid after such factors like weather and storms affect the end results.

We hope that this answers any questions you may have had about the System Connection Fee. We could not run this Co-op without your contributions and we will continue to provide the highest quality of service at the lowest possible cost.

ON YOUR BILL: THE SYSTEM CONNECTION FEE

On each bill, all of our members pay a System Connection Fee. This is a fee split evenly between and paid by all our members to ensure everyone contributes evenly to operating and maintaining our electric system. This fee is separate from any usage of electricity in an individual home. It's like the costs you pay to own your car, even when you aren't driving it.

Everything you need to keep your vehicle ready for the road:



Everything needed to bring electric service to you:



Wire	Bucket Trucks & Line Equipment	Poles
System Improvements	Accounting & Billing	
24/7 Service	Right of Way Maintenance	
Insurance	Employees	Phone Services
Safety Equipment and Programs		
Office Building	Taxes	Meters
Computer Systems & Software	Online Services	

www.sussexrec.com

973-875-5101

 Sussex Rural
Electric Cooperative, Inc.

We clear certain areas in our service territory, known as rights of way, to:

- Keep power lines clear of tree limbs
- Restore power outages more quickly
- Reduce unexpected costs for repairs



Maintaining rights of way improves service reliability for you – our members!

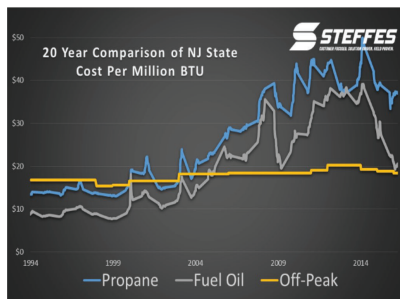


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For more information go to www.sussexrec.com or call 973.875.5101



CURRENTS is published monthly by
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Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Cookware Tip: Copper-bottomed pans heat faster on the stove. In the oven, ceramic and glass dishes are better than metal. With ceramic and glass dishes, you can turn the oven down about 25 degrees, and your meal will cook just as quickly.

Source: energy.gov

