



# Singing River Electric Power Association

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Lee Hedegaard, General Manager & CEO  
Lorri Freeman, Manager of Communications  
Amanda Parker, Communications Specialist

For more information call 601-947-4211/ 228-497-1313 x 2251 or visit our website at [www.singingriver.com](http://www.singingriver.com)



## Electricity use, not rates, cause electricity bills to rise



Lee Hedegaard, General Manager and CEO Singing River Electric

Recent high electricity bills reflect the reality experienced by electric consumers throughout the region, as cold weather drove up everyone's electricity use in January and February.

Singing River Electric experienced all-time peaks in kilowatt-hour sales as heating units worked longer to keep houses warm during the unusual sustained cold.

You may wonder how the weather can affect your electric bill. To understand what can influence the amount of your electric bill, you must first understand what makes up the bill.

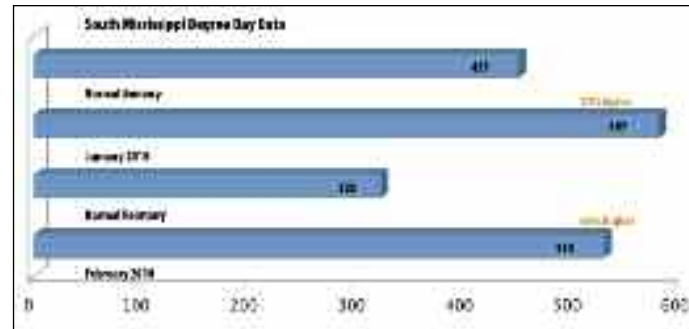
There are two components that make up your electric bill - your rate and the number of kilowatt-hours used. Singing River Electric's rates beginning in December 2009 were actually lower than the same time the previous year due to wholesale power cost reduction and rate restructuring.

The reason for the recent high bills is increased use during sustained cold. Severe cold winters or hot summers can increase your electric bill. This is evident when studying degree day data.

Degree day information compares the outdoor temperature to a standard

65°F. The higher the degree day number, the more energy needed for heating or cooling.

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) data, south Mississippi saw a sharp increase in heating degree days



during the first two months of this year.

There are steps you can take to manage energy use in your home. Visit [www.singingriver.com](http://www.singingriver.com) to see how.

**Energy Tip:**  
**Service your HVAC system**

  
Jeff Gray  
Member Services Rep.  
[gray@singingriver.com](mailto:gray@singingriver.com)

www.singingriver.com/energyguide.html

Winter is almost over, and the summer heat will be here soon.

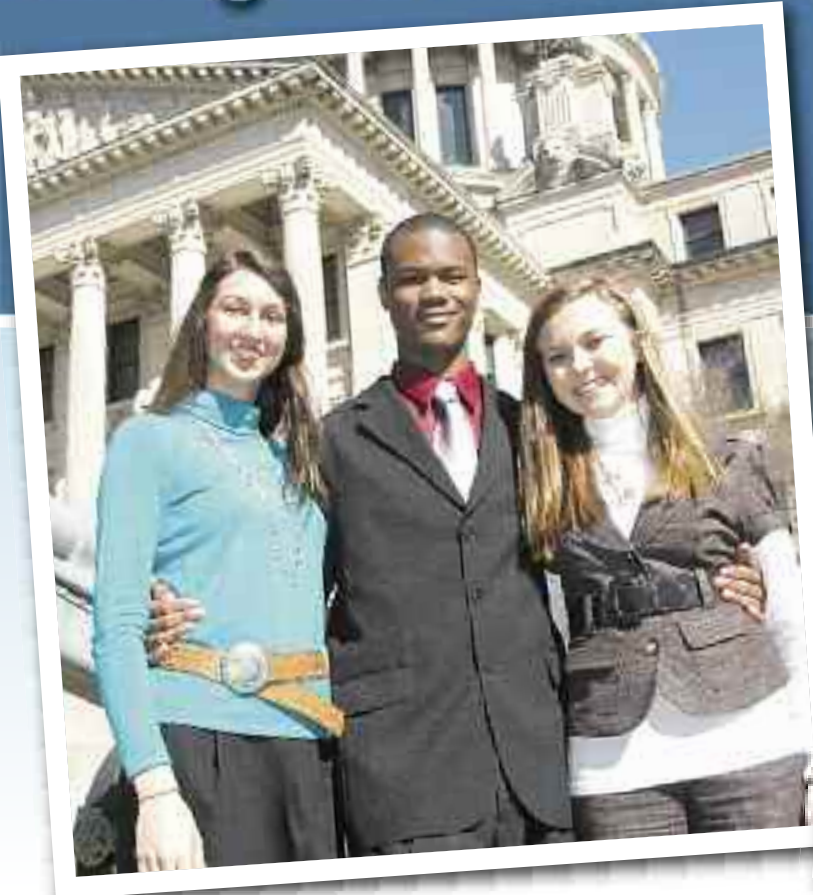
Ensure your HVAC or air conditioning system is operating properly by replacing air filters once a month and implementing an annual service contract with a licensed service provider. Service contracts should include visually inspecting the unit, checking the refrigerant levels and cleaning the coils if necessary.

We also recommend that members regularly check their outside units during the summer. You should find the outside unit exhausting hot air away from the unit. If the outside unit's fan has stopped, is turning slow, or turning in reverse (pulling air down into the unit), call your service company.

Finally, Singing River Electric recommends installing a programmable thermostat. Older analog thermostats not working properly could cost you as much as 5 percent per degree of your cooling cost. One season of use could pay for the new programmable thermostat.

Also, remember to keep your thermostat programmed at 78° or higher during the summer, especially when you are not at home.

## Singing River Electric students Strengthen their leadership skills



Far left: Taylor Lowe, Stephen Benn and Jessica Brouckaert visit the state Capitol during the Youth Leadership Workshop.  
Left: Jessica Brouckaert and Taylor Lowe work together in a team building exercise during the workshop.  
Below: Stephen Benn works with a group of students to complete a task during an exercise at the workshop.

Singing River Electric Power Association sponsored three high school juniors for the 24th annual Youth Leadership Workshop in Jackson.

Stephen Benn, Jessica Brouckaert and Taylor Lowe participated in the three-day workshop intended to bring young minds together and strengthen their leadership abilities for the future.

***"You must have a passion to help others. It takes a special person to be a leader, one who is not afraid to be out front, make decisions and guide groups in the right direction."***  
- Michael Callahan

This year 60 students attended the workshop, which is coordinated by the Electric Power Associations of Mississippi. The students travel from different areas of the state and are given the opportunity to take a closer look at our state government as well as participate in activities that greatly enhance their leadership skills.

"These students had the opportunity to see their state government in action," said Lee Hedegaard, general manager and CEO of Singing River Electric. "Our elected officials spent time explaining the legislative process and encouraging the students to get

involved. They are very supportive of our program and our young people."

These students have shown a natural ability to set good examples and a desire to further their skills in becoming future leaders. The workshop greatly emphasizes teamwork, good communication and lots of fun.

The workshop took place March 3-5 and included events such as team-building activities, a visit to the Capitol, a

meeting with their legislators, and several inspiring motivational speakers. Students were asked to put their critical thinking skills to work during a town hall meeting where they were faced with weighing the pros and cons of pressing issues their generation faces.

Lt. Gov. Phil Bryant visited with the group. He recounted his journey from early youth in Moorhead, MS, to holding the second-highest office in state government. He challenged the youth with a question, "What do you want to do in your life? Anything is possible if you set goals and work

hard every day to accomplish them.

"Education and learning from others is the most important ingredient in your development years," added Bryant. "I challenge each one of you to take advantage of educational opportunities and prepare yourself to be future leaders. I encourage you to grow where you were planted. Mississippi offers a lot and has a place for you to serve."

Michael Callahan, CEO of Electric Power Associations of Mississippi, outlined the characteristics of a true leader in an inspiring presentation. "You must have a passion to help others. It takes a special person to be a leader, one who is not afraid to be out front, make decisions and guide groups in the right direction." The leader of Mississippi's electric power associations reminded the students of the responsibilities that come with being a leader. "You must take your responsibilities seriously and understand your decisions and actions affect the lives of others."

Stephen is the son of Bobby and Lenora Benn. He is a junior attending

Moss Point High School.

Jessica is the daughter of Brian Brouckaert and Tamela Gartman. She is a junior attending Ocean Springs High School.

Taylor is the daughter of Michael and Mary Lowe. She is a junior attending Resurrection Catholic High School.

In addition to the workshop, the students will make a seven-day journey to the nation's capital in June.

This event features visits to the popular monuments and memorials as well as meetings with Mississippi's senators and representatives.

## New account number needed to pay bill beginning April 12

Singing River Electric Power Association is streamlining in-house business practices and preparing to convert the cooperative's customer service support software system from AS400 to NISC (National Information Solutions Cooperative).

The software conversion will take place beginning Monday, April 12.

On that date, members will be reassigned new account numbers. **All payments made for bills dated Monday, April 12 or later must include the updated account number.** New account numbers can be found on the member's billing statement beginning Monday, April 12. **All online payments will need to set up a new user name and password with the new account number.**



Singing River Electric members will be given a new account number as part of the cooperative's new software conversion. Members will need the new account number to pay bills beginning Monday, April 12. The account number is located in the upper right-hand portion of your billing statement. Please check for new account number beginning April 12.