

Singing River Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Bringing power and energy services to local communities

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR CEO

Working to safely provide power to members

The last two months have been a huge challenge for our members and the communities we serve. For many, this disruption in our lives has caused anxiety, illness, additional responsibilities and/or financial hardship. As a member-owned electric cooperative, we have and will continue to look out for the best interest of our membership by providing safe, reliable and affordable electricity, especially during times like these.

Our employees have also felt the stresses of combating this illness but have stepped up to the challenge. I wanted to take a moment to share with you some of their accomplishments during this pandemic. As an essential service

provider, Singing River Electric must continue to provide reliable electric service to our membership. Much of our employees' day-to-day work must occur on job sites or within the walls of our offices; however, our team has made physical and technological strides to allow for many office employees to work from home to protect their safety and that of our members. Crews are also working modified and staggered schedules to further protect their safety. Even with these adjustments, SRE employees have continued to respond to all new service requests in a timely manner.

Our newly adjusted employee schedule was challenged in late March as a tornado caused damage in George County. As outage reports streamed into SRE's outage management system, servicemen discovered 14 broken poles across the county. As expected, crews from each of our districts responded in a timely manner to make needed repairs and restore power to nearly 2,400 members. I would like to thank our employees for a job well done, even during stressful times.

Hopefully, the COVID-19 pandemic is on the downslope and things get back to normal (or a new normal) in the coming days. Please continue to adhere to CDC safeguarding guidance to help prevent the spread of viruses. Utilize resources on our website to assist where needed to help manage your bill payments. And know that we are here to assist you, whether by phone, drive-up window, mobile app or website. Our priority is safely providing dependable and exceptional electric service to you.



Brian Hughey
General Manager & CEO

BRIAN HUGHEY
General Manager & CEO

LORRI FREEMAN, APR
Manager of Public Relations

AMANDA PARKER
Public Relations Specialist

For more information, call 601-947-4211, 228-497-1313 or visit singingriver.com.

[@singingriverelectric](https://www.facebook.com/singingriverelectric)
[@SRECooperative](https://www.instagram.com/SRECooperative)

SRE is an equal opportunity employer and provider.



Nick DeAngelo
Manager of Energy Services
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Increased energy use

We hope this month's magazine finds you and your family well. As we have sheltered in place due to COVID-19 for much of March and April, you may have noticed your family's energy use rising. You may not know, however, that you have access to a free tool that can help — the SmartHub mobile app.

An important feature of our SmartHub app is the ability to view daily and weekly electricity use. This allows you to monitor your energy use and make changes mid-month to reduce energy costs and manage your bill.

For instance, if you have a programmable thermostat that was typically set for 80 degrees while you are away but during the shelter-in-place period with family home was lowered to a more comfortable setting, you will see increased energy use during that time period. Referencing the SmartHub app daily will allow you to monitor your energy use and make adjustments when possible. This could result in lower electricity bills.

Please take advantage of the many calculators, tips and tools available at singingriver.com/ways-to-save or a call at 601-947-4211 or 228-497-1313 to speak to one of our representatives.

Visit singingriver.com or energystar.gov for more tips.

ANNUAL MEETING SET FOR JUNE 25

Watch for proxy/notice in the mail

Singing River Electric's 2020 annual membership meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 25. At this time, we are planning to hold an in-person meeting; however, that could change if COVID-19 stay-at-home measures are extended. Please monitor our website at singingriver.com and our social media posts on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter for updates.

This year's candidates include: District 1, Post 2 - Robert Steele; District 2, Post 2 - Roy Grafe; and District 3, Post 2 - Kristal Sisson. The slate of nominees was approved by SRE members serving on the Credentials and Election Committee. According to the cooperative bylaws, the candidates' names were placed in the nomination for election to a three-year term beginning June 25 at the cooperative's annual meeting.

To conduct business at the annual meeting, a quorum of at least 10 percent of the membership is necessary. The quorum is derived by adding the number of members present at the meeting, the valid online votes, and the number of valid proxies received.

Annual meeting notices and proxies will be mailed on Tuesday, May 12, to all members. The deadline for voting online and returning proxies is Tuesday, June 16, at close of business. Your participation in director elections counts toward the quorum needed to hold and do business at the meeting. It is crucially important that we receive your online vote or proxy in order to reach our quorum this year and complete the business of the annual meeting, especially in the event that COVID-19 restrictions force this meeting to be rescheduled or live-streamed with no in-person attendees.

If COVID-19 stay-at-home restrictions are lifted, any SRE member may vote in person at the June 25 membership meeting. Members can also vote online or by proxy. Each member is entitled to one vote regardless of the number of accounts in the member's name. A proxy may be assigned to either another SRE member, including a member of the current board of directors, or appointed to the board as a whole. A member can vote up to 200 assigned proxies at any membership meeting. The presence of a member at the meeting, or in the case of a joint membership, the presence of a spouse shall revoke the proxy. All proxies must be received by SRE's Lucedale office by close of business on June 16.

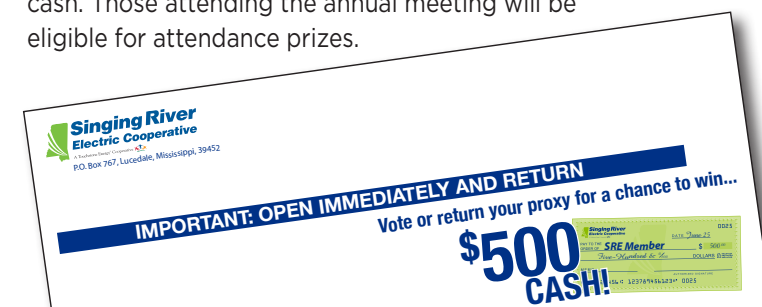
Members returning their proxy, voting online as well as those who attend the meeting, will qualify to win up to \$500 cash. Those attending the annual meeting will be eligible for attendance prizes.



Credentials and Election Committee - Clockwise from left: Milton Driskell, Obie Wells, Linda Eckford, Richard Fleming and Marvin Blankinchip. (Not pictured - Phil Busby.)

The membership meeting will be held at our headquarters office located at 11187 Old 63 South in Lucedale. Registration begins at 4:30 p.m., and the meeting will begin at 6 p.m. The meeting's business section will include the cooperative's financial, management and board reports, as well as the board of directors election. SRE has a 10-person board of directors elected from the membership in three geographic districts. Each year, one director post from each district is up for election. Every three years, District 3 has two director posts open. Directors are elected for a three-year period. Directors are listed along with the geographic district descriptions at singingriver.com/my-coop.

Nominations for election to the board of directors are made by petition. Interested members must acquire signatures of 25 SRE members on a form provided by the cooperative. Applicants must complete and return a director candidate packet to the Lucedale office and be certified by the Credentials and Election Committee before being placed on the ballot. **The deadline for nomination by petition to be placed on the 2020 Annual Meeting notice was February 28, 2020. This deadline and a notice for nominations was placed in the December 2019 and January/February 2020 issues of the Today in Mississippi member publication.**



2020 Annual Membership Meeting Notice

Thursday, June 25 Registration opens at 4:30 p.m.
11187 Old 63 South, Lucedale Meeting begins at 6:00 p.m.

THERE ARE THREE WAYS TO PARTICIPATE: IN PERSON, BY PROXY AND ONLINE

Eight members who vote online or return their proxies by the June 16 deadline will be selected to receive a \$250 CASH prize. One member who votes online or returns the proxy by the deadline will receive a special grand prize of \$500 CASH!

THIS IS NOT A DRILL



Singing River Electric crews quickly restore power following George County tornado

Weather resources

These resources are helpful during weather emergencies:

- MEMA app
- WLOX-TV 13 Weather app

You can also follow several Facebook pages, including:

- Singing River Electric
- MS Emergency Management
- U.S. Weather Service Mobile, AL
- U.S. Weather Service New Orleans, LA
- U.S. Weather Service Jackson, MS



In the midst of social distancing and a COVID-19 virus stay-at-home order, Mother Nature decided to kick things up a bit. About 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, March 31, cell phones began alerting those in the George County area of the approaching storm and tornado warning. Within minutes, an EF-1 tornado tore an eight-mile path of destruction in southeast George County.

As Singing River Electric personnel assessed damage, they found 14 broken power poles scattered across the county. Crews from all SRE offices responded to restore power to nearly 2,400 members. Damage to homes, vehicles and other structures were observed.

“We had just begun to modify crew schedules to protect employees and the community from the virus when this happened,” said Singing River Electric CEO Brian Hughey. “This was our first test of the new schedules, and our employees responded quickly, as expected, to get the job done.”

Right-of-way contract crews cut trees off of power lines, and SRE crews worked to restore power to all who could safely receive it before the end of the day.



See story about Easter severe weather and tornadoes on page 17.

Singing River Electric responds to COVID-19

What started out as an action plan for both members and employees including sanitizing offices, quickly changed to lobby closures and figuring out how to equip employees to assist members from their homes.

“Our plan adapted quickly as the Coronavirus spread across the country and stay-at-home measures were put in place in Mississippi,” said CEO Brian Hughey.

Drive-up windows continued to serve members, and communication increased on additional contact-free service options including phone service, the SmartHub mobile app and website located at singingriver.com. Crews and employees were placed on modified work schedules to protect their health and the safety and those in the community.

“Our priority is and always will be the safety of our members and employees,” Hughey stated. “Singing River Electric has been successful in rapidly adjusting both internal and external processes while maintaining a high-level of electric and member service, even with the challenges of social distancing for members and employees alike.”



Singing River Electric family members, employees and retirees worked quickly to sew homemade masks for local healthcare workers. SRE retiree Carole Merritt, Grace Allgood, daughter of SRE foreman Gary Allgood, Tonette Mills, mother of SRE engineer Drew Mills and SRE's Nikki Stork all took to their sewing machines to help those working at area hospitals.

“My granddaughter works at Forrest General Hospital, and they don't have enough masks,” said Merritt. “It breaks my heart to know they're on the front lines and having to deal with these shortages.”

Merritt sent her masks to Greene County and Forrest General hospitals. Grace Allgood loves to sew and is happy to help in this time of need. Her masks went to Singing River Health System and its Regional Cancer Center. Nikki Stork's masks benefitted the VA Hospital in Biloxi, while Tonnette Mills made masks for our very own SRE member service representatives, as well as friends and family.

Singing River Electric thanks everyone who has worked to support our healthcare workers and first responders during the pandemic.



SRE Retiree Carole Merritt

CONSERVE WHILE YOU FLATTEN THE CURVE

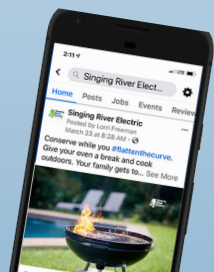
Families have been quarantined at home due to illness or staying home to prevent it, and all of that adds up to increased energy use. Singing River Electric has worked to educate members during March and April with Facebook posts sharing energy tips with the slogan, “Conserve while you #flattenthecurve.”

“We knew members would be using their phones while home and that Facebook and other social media platforms could be a good communication tool,” said SRE manager of public relations Lorri Freeman.

The tips are easy to follow including ideas like grilling outdoors, turning off lights and ceiling fans when you leave the room, and turning off the AC and opening windows to take advantage of cooler mornings.

“The concept was shared with other Mississippi electric cooperatives and used throughout the state to encourage electric cooperative members to conserve at home,” said Freeman.

To see the tips, like us on Facebook and Instagram at Singing River Electric and follow us on Twitter at SRECooperative.



HONORING HEALTHCARE WORKERS



Singing River Electric offices displayed ribbons as part of the Blue Ribbon Initiative to honor healthcare workers and other first responders during the COVID-19 crisis. The headquarters office in Lucedale also displayed lights in the shape of a heart. The actions were meant to support those in local communities who were working on the frontlines and servicing those in our communities that were fighting the Coronavirus.

EASTER TORNADOS AND SEVERE WEATHER TEAR THROUGH THE STATE CAUSING IMMENSE DAMAGE



Singing River Electric crews worked through the night on Sunday, April 12, to restore power locally to nearly 3,000 homes and businesses. Severe weather and multiple tornadoes cut across the state causing loss of life and damage to hundreds of homes and businesses. Power was restored to all but one outage along the river in Greene County by the next morning.

As crews worked Monday morning, April 13, to restore those members in Greene County, a SRE six-man crew left to assist the Moss community in Jones County served by Dixie Electric Power Association. This sister electric cooperative just north of SRE serves Jones, Covington and Jasper counties, which were some of the hardest hit in Mississippi. At the height of destruction, Dixie Electric had more

than 7,000 meters out and more than 200 broken power poles. The National Weather Service in Jackson confirmed the area had been hit by a two-mile wide, long-track EF4 tornado. The widest tornado in the history of the state.

On Tuesday, April 14, three SRE crews with 14 men and seven trucks returned to the stricken Moss community to resume restoration work. SRE continued to switch out crews daily during the week as requested to help Dixie Electric in their rebuilding process.

For more information on tornado restoration efforts, see Singing River Electric and Dixie Electric's Facebook pages or visit their websites at singingriver.com and dixieepa.com.



MEET YOUR SRE BOARD

Singing River Electric is led by member-consumers like you who understand and listen to the community. Our 10-member board of directors is elected by the membership to serve a three-year term.



Singing River Electric board members (left to right): Ron Wilson, Ralph Hicks and Robert Steele.



Singing River Electric board members (left to right): Roy Grafe, Howard Davis and Travis Baxter.