



A MESSAGE FROM YOUR CEO

## Concern for community means more here



**Brian Hughey**  
General Manager & CEO

Each October, Singing River Electric celebrates National Cooperative Month along with more than 800 other electric cooperatives. As an organization, we are reminded of why and by whom we were formed 83 years ago. Singing River

Electric is operated by and for the people of the communities we serve. In addition to our steadfast mission to provide safe, reliable and affordable electricity, we're always seeking ways to live out the seven cooperative principles: voluntary and open membership; democratic member control; members' economic participation; autonomy and independence; education, training and information; cooperation among cooperatives; and concern for community. These seven principles combine to help build trust among the co-op, its members, and the community.

Throughout the pandemic, the seventh principle, concern for community, has been a driving force. We took strides to keep employees and members safe in our offices and communicated ways to pay with limited contact like the SmartHub mobile app and drive-through windows. We awarded Neighbors Helping Neighbors Community Grants to first responders, donated T-shirts to our local FabLab to create masks for students and teachers, cleaned boat launches and assisted at local food pantries. Singing River Electric's employees and board of directors continued to aid in the economic development of our communities through personal involvement, financial support, education and innovation.

Weather has certainly impacted our local communities during the pandemic. Our crews have responded to outages caused by ice storms, hurricanes, flooding, tornadoes and other weather events. Thanks to our dedicated and skilled employees, I am proud to say we made it through successfully.

One of the challenges for many of our community members during the pandemic proved to be the lack of adequate internet service. This need brought a potential opportunity for your electric cooperative, and we have risen to the challenge to find a solution. Through our fiber subsidiary, Singing River Connect, we have three pilot projects that will bring fiber internet service to nearly 2,000 potential subscribers in five Mississippi counties.

We are carefully working through the challenges associated with starting a new business and assuring its necessary relationship with our existing member-owned cooperative. We are also constructing a 400-mile fiber ring which will connect all Singing River Electric substations and offices. Exciting times lie ahead as we patiently wait for the fiber optic build-out within the pilot project areas and determine the project's success and as we advance our electric service reliability through direct communication with our substations. Investments for the fiber ring and three pilot projects are expected to total \$15 million; however, we know this is an investment in our local communities and one that will meet a great need.

We are more than a utility. We are an electric cooperative: member led, member owned, and focused on the needs of the communities we serve.



**Jeff Gray**  
Energy Services Representative  
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### Know your light bulbs

Light bulbs have evolved over the years to today's energy-efficient LEDs. Whether you are using decorative light strands for the holidays or replacing a lightbulb in a lamp, here are some things to remember:

- Incandescent bulbs are the tried and true original. Depending on the brightness you need, they range from 40, 60, 75 or 100 watts. The energy use in these bulbs is measured at 10% light and 90% heat, which is not efficient and can add to heat gain, causing your air conditioner to work harder.
- Compact fluorescent light (CFL) bulbs were the first energy-saving bulbs. A 60-watt incandescent bulb was replaced with a 14-watt (60-watt equivalent) CFL, using less energy. However, CFLs had a shorter use life than expected and disposal issues.
- A 60-watt equivalent LED (light emitting diode) bulb uses nine watts of power and is currently the most efficient lighting choice. LEDs usually have a life span of 10 years or 11,000 hours. The lighting facts label on your LED bulb box will tell you the lumens or brightness of that bulb and also the light appearance or color of the light.

Always read the facts label on the bulb box to know what kind of light you are buying.

### Loading...

#### Fiber construction process

SR Connect contractors prepare poles in the Brewer pilot area before running fiber.



Contractors string fiber in Richton for a section of fiber installed along one of three feeders, or power line sections, in pilot project 1.



## Three Fiber Pilots, Seven Steps to Fiber Construction



There are seven steps to fiber construction, demonstrated in the graphic above. But what step are the different pilot projects on? Let's discuss that.

**Pilot project 1 in the SRE Brewer substation area** serving co-op members in Greene, Perry, and Wayne counties is projected to be in *Step 7 - Scheduling Installations* this month for the first of three feeders (power line sections) in this pilot. Contract crews are currently finishing up service drops and drop splicing. Prospective subscribers in this pilot area will receive a mailed postcard and email, as well as notice yard signs along streets in their area alerting them when to call and schedule an installation. Prospective fiber subscribers in Pilot 1 - feeders 2 and 3, outside of the National Forest area, will follow and receive emails and postcards in late October or early November.

**Pilot project 2 in the Vestry community and SRE Aleco substation area** of Jackson County

is in fiber construction *Step 2 - Make-ready Construction* and projected to enter *Step 3 - Fiber Construction* shortly. Contract crews are changing out poles, rearranging equipment on the poles as needed, and installing fiber and fiber splice points.

**Pilot project 3 in the SRE Agricola substation area** serving members in George County is projected to be in *Step 1 - Make-ready Engineering* in December 2021. During this step, contract crews will conduct pole-to-pole inspections and decide if poles need to be changed out or if existing pole attachments need to be modified.

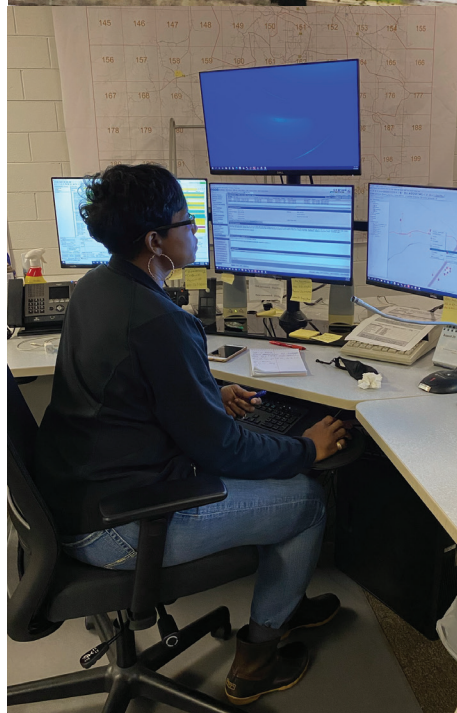
Great effort is being put into communicating with SRE's membership on the fiber pilot projects' status. Dates are subject to change, but all effort is being made to complete the work as safely and quickly as possible. Fiber expansion beyond the pilot projects is dependent on the success of the pilots. SRE's board of directors will be monitoring this progress into the new year.

## Upcoming right-of-way projects

Singing River Electric clears trees, limbs, and underbrush from the area around and below the power lines called the right-of-way. Right-of-way clearing helps decrease the number of outages and reduces the risk of someone coming in contact with the power lines.

Here are the substations and surrounding areas that are either currently being cleared or where clearing will begin soon:

- **Basin Substation** - Highway 63, Barton-Agricola Road, River Road and surrounding areas.
- **Forts Lake Substation** - Independence Road, Forts Lake Road and surrounding areas.
- **Lucedale South Substation** - Highway 26, Twin Creek Road, Highway 63 and surrounding areas.
- **Escatawpa South Substation** - Highway 613, Saracennia Road, Coda Road and surrounding areas.



Hurricane  
Ida makes  
presence  
known on  
Gulf Coast



**D**eadly and destructive Hurricane Ida made landfall on the Louisiana coast as a Category 4 storm with top wind speeds of 150 miles per hour. Making landfall on the 16th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, Ida made sure her impact was felt across the Gulf Coast before downgrading to a tropical storm and moving inland.

Though Louisiana took the brunt force of impact, Mississippi shared the destruction. Mississippi's electric cooperatives together experienced more than 85,000 power outages following Hurricane Ida. Singing River Electric alone restored power to a total of 11,959 meters

throughout the event.

"Our employees truly excelled," said Singing River Electric General Manager and CEO Brian Hughey. "They responded and worked the long hours necessary, in rough conditions, to get power restored quickly and safely to our local communities."



For photos of the restoration progress, visit Singing River Electric's Facebook page at [facebook.com/singingriverelectric](https://www.facebook.com/singingriverelectric).

# Answering the call for help

*SRE crews assist Magnolia Electric and South Louisiana Electric following Hurricane Ida*




**M**any Mississippi electric cooperatives were impacted greatly by Category 4 Hurricane Ida, including Magnolia Electric Power headquartered near Summit and serving six counties in southwest Mississippi. MEP had 26,600 of their 32,000 meters without power on August 30, following Hurricane Ida. Our crew of 11 trucks and 18 employees headed to MEP late on Monday, August 30, after restoring power locally. They returned on Wednesday, Sept. 8.

On Wednesday, Sept. 22, Singing River Electric sent four linemen to South Louisiana Electric Cooperative Association to assist with post-Ida power restoration. Based in Houma, La., SLECA serves 21,000 meters and had more than 19,000 meters out after the storm. The marshy bayou area and more than 1,000 broken poles are making power restoration a challenge. SRE linemen are reporting to Morgan City.

## Flashback

*Give back after Hurricane Katrina.*

One the evening of August 28, 2005, SRE prepared for a monster storm. We had no idea that the next day would re-write the history books on storm response and preparation, or just how truly devastating a monster storm could be. Our fellow cooperatives in Louisiana have sadly now lived this nightmare. SRE employees swelled to more than 1,000 following Katrina. We were ever so grateful to all who came from near and far away. We will always answer a co-op's call for help.



Businesses answer to  
shareholders. But with a  
cooperative, the  
shareholder is *you*.

**Member-owned.  
Member-led.**



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