

cooperative REVIEW

for members of Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Winter storms
wreak havoc
on Southern MD 3

The 2010 Census
arrives in March 4

Rate decrease
postponed 5

Success By 6
promotes school
readiness 5

Plug into green 6

Around Town 6

Your home
could be wasting
money—we have
programs to help 8

SMECO linemen gear up for the Gaff 'n' Go Rodeo

The work of a lineman is dangerous and requires physical strength, agility, and great skill with consistent ability and safe practices. The Gaff 'n' Go Lineman's Rodeo is an opportunity for linemen to test their skills against those of their peers.

The Gaff 'n' Go is also an opportunity for members of the community to see the

Gaff 'n' Go
continued page 2

February 2010 was a month of record-breaking snow. Residents found themselves pummelled by consecutive storms that caused widespread power outages. SMECO's crews battled wind, snow, and sleet to get power back to our customers as quickly and safely as possible. (Page 3)



Gaff 'n' Go

CONTINUED

skill, strength, and respect for electricity it takes to be a utility lineman.

SMECO linemen have been participating in the Gaff 'n' Go Rodeo since 2004. This year, two teams and six apprentices will be traveling to the rodeo to compete. Each team consists of two Journeymen and a Groundman. Each team participates in five mandatory events, including the pole climb, hurt-man rescue, and three mystery events.

Apprentices also compete. They are judged based on the pole climb, hurt-man rescue, a written test, and two mystery events. A person is considered an Apprentice for up to four years after he enters the apprenticeship.

Last year, SMECO linemen won nine individual awards in the obstacle course, hurt-man rescue, cross-arm relocation, and dead lift competitions.

Some SMECO crew members have completed the Hurt-man Rescue in a little over one minute. That means that from ground zero, they put on their equipment, climb the pole, tie off the victim, and return safely to the ground in a little over sixty seconds!

The events are judged by utility supervisors and previous Rodeo contestants following very strict criteria based on correct work procedures and safety practices. The top three teams and top three apprentices will receive paid entry to the International Lineman's Rodeo in Kansas City, Missouri, being held October 14–16, 2010.

Attend the Eighth Annual Gaff 'n' Go Rodeo and cheer on your SMECO linemen April 10, 2010, at the Meadow Event Park (home of the Virginia State Fair) in Doswell, Virginia. The event is right in our back yard this year: located off I-95, exit 98, one mile east of King's Dominion. If you would like more information on attending the Gaff 'n' Go Rodeo, please visit www.gaff-n-go.com.



SMECO lineman competing in the Hurt-man Rescue

Winter storms wreak havoc on Southern Maryland

February marked a time of historic snow for the residents of Southern Maryland. We faced back-to-back blizzards in less than a week and all-time seasonal snow totals, making this the snowiest winter on record.

Before the first storm hit on February 5, our crews, contractor crews, and crews on loan from other Cooperatives were on standby. A majority of the outages crews repaired were caused by tree branches loaded with ice and snow that fell onto power lines. Most of the falling trees affected only lines, but others caused utility poles to break. In many cases, linemen were forced to wade through hip-deep snow and battle blowing wind to reach trouble spots, hauling the necessary equipment and climbing poles to repair lines because the rights-of-way were blocked to vehicles. Crews worked diligently to restore power even as the next storm loomed.

All storm-related outages from the first blizzard were restored by 10 p.m. Monday night, prior to the next wave of snow. The second storm's high winds caused white-out conditions. For a period of time, even snow plow drivers were grounded, and linemen were restricted from going up in the bucket trucks to complete repairs. Because of the many harrowing conditions and setbacks, SMECO had a total of 11,824 customers affected

Crews work to restore power in Nanjemoy, where pine trees waged war with the power lines.



Snowverkill
continued page 4

Snowverkill

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Linemen worked in deep snow and high wind to restore power to customer-members.

by outages at the peak. There were a total of 1,232 incidents from February 5 to February 11, 2010. Thanks to the hard work of 45 SMECO crews, 10 Pike crews, 10 Penn Line crews and 2 crews from Cooperatives in Virginia, 42 percent of the incidents were restored in under four hours, 58 percent in under eight hours, and 85 percent within one day. All storm-related outages were resolved by Wednesday, February 10, and SMECO was back to normal operations. After power was restored to all our customer-members, SMECO sent four service trucks to northern Maryland to help Pepco with their restoration efforts.

The 2010 Census arrives in March

The Census counts every resident in the United States and is required by law to take place every 10 years. The data collected from the Census help communities receive more than \$400 billion in federal funds each year for services such as education, hospitals, schools, bridges, tunnels, senior centers, job training, and emergency services. The Census information also determines the number of seats each state occupies in the U.S. House of Representatives.

It's easy to see what an accurate count of residents can do for your community: better infrastructure, more services and a brighter tomorrow for everyone. Your participation is important! If you receive a questionnaire, fill out the easy 10-question form and promptly mail it back. Your answers are strictly confidential.

Make a difference in your community and be counted in 2010—complete and return your 2010 Census form.

Rate decrease postponed

SMECO filed a request with the Maryland Public Service Commission to lower our Standard Offer Service (SOS) rate. The new rate, which SMECO asked to take effect in March, is being postponed to allow the agency more time for review. Until the SOS reduction is approved, customers will see a reduction in March through their Power Cost Adjustment credit.

Success By 6 promotes school readiness

The Family Fun Fest, sponsored by United Way's "Success By 6" initiative, is offered free to families of children age 5 and younger to promote school readiness. On April 17, 2010, Fun Fest will be held at Barstow Elementary School from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The PNC Bank's Mobile Learning Adventure is a featured component. The exhibit includes kiosks to test parents on their early education smarts and includes a



"What I Want To Be When I Grow Up" photo station.

The Family Fun Fest gives families hands-on experience with activities and tips on how parents can prepare their child for school. Many local agencies provide information on kindergarten and pre-K registration, literacy, and children's programs in Calvert County. The event offers performances by popular children's entertainers, free pizza and cookies, and giveaways.

The sixth annual Family Fun Fest events are sponsored by PNC Bank, Target, and Friend of Families. Events are coordinated by Success By 6, Calvert County Public Schools, and the Calvert County Interagency Council for Families and Children. For more information, visit www.unitedwaycalvert.org.

plug into Green

Heating and cooling costs account for up to half of your energy usage and dollars. Increase the efficiency of your heating and cooling system with these tips:

- Change your air filter regularly, at least every three months, preferably monthly
- Tune up your HVAC equipment yearly
- Install a programmable thermostat
- Seal your heating and cooling ducts
- Consider installing ENERGY STAR® qualified heating and cooling equipment

around TOWN

April 9

North Point HS Choral Boosters Basket Bingo

Sponsor: NPHS
Choral Boosters
5 – 10 p.m., NPHS
Cafeteria, Entry fee
301-643-4613

April 9 – 10

8th Annual Gaff 'n' Go Lineman's Rodeo

Sponsor: VMDAEC
Virginia Farm
Bureau Center
Caroline County, VA
gaff-n-go.com

April 10

Spaghetti Dinner

Sponsor: Ironsides
Volunteer Rescue Squad
4 – 7 p.m., Fee
6120 Port Tobacco Rd
301-246-9090
ironsidesrescue.com

April 11

American Legion Bluegrass

Sponsor: Sons of the
American Legion
2 p.m., doors
open at noon
American Legion
Post 238, Hughesville
Reservations required.
Non-perishable food
donations accepted.
301-737-3004
americanlegionbluegrass.com

April 17

Earth Day Clean-up & Celebration

Sponsor: American
Chestnut Land Trust
8:30 a.m. – noon
Meet at the south-side
trailhead across from
Gate A on Scientists
Cliffs Road, Port Republic
410-414-3400
www.acltweb.org





Visit www.smeco.coop/community/aroundtown for more events.

Discovering

Archaeology Day

Sponsor: Jefferson Patterson
Park and Museum

10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

410-586-8557

www.jefpat.org

Appraiser Fair

Sponsor: Mechanicsville Vol.
Fire Dept. Ladies Auxiliary

10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Mechanicsville VFD

Small fees and item
limits will apply.

301-884-4519

301-884-3900

www.mvfd.com

Family Fun Fest

Sponsor: United Way's
Success By 6 initiative

10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Barstow Elem. School

410-286-0101

www.unitedwaycalvert.org

April 17 – 18

The Garden Fair at Sotterley Plantation

Sponsor:

Historic Sotterley

10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

www.sotterley.org

April 25

Bull Roast

Sponsor: American
Legion Post 221

Noon – 4 p.m.

21690 Colton Point Road
Avenue, Fee

301-769-4346/301-769-2220

www.alpost221.webs.com

April 30

Holy Face 17th Annual Spring Festival

Sponsor: Holy Face Church

5 – 11pm, St. Mary's

County Fairgrounds

Leonardtown

301-994-0525

Your home could be wasting money—we have programs to help

Heating and cooling costs account for up to half of your energy usage and dollars. SMECO is offering a variety of incentives to help you save energy and save money by increasing the efficiency of your home's heating, ventilating, and air conditioning (HVAC) system.

Now you can save when you install a new central air conditioner or heat pump. A new high-efficiency unit can help you conserve energy, save money, and protect the environment. To be eligible for a rebate, units must be installed by participating contractors.

Our HVAC programs promote the following:

- High-efficiency equipment
- Quality installation and proper tune-up
- Properly sealed duct distribution systems to improve airflow and comfort, and reduce equipment run times and lower operating costs.



Incentives range from \$75–\$400 depending on your level of participation.

If you have an energy-saving tip that could help your neighbors save money on their electric bills, e-mail us at jonna.jones@smeco.coop or call 301-274-4482.