

# cooperative REVIEW

for members of Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative

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*Former Maryland Senator Bernie Fowler and his great grandchild led the way during the 23rd Annual Patuxent River Wade-in at its new location at Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum. Full story is featured on page 4.*

## Network upgrade status update

SMECO has big plans to increase your network capacity and reliability. A heavy investment of time and money has been infused into the construction of new stations and new lines in order to increase capacity and in upgrading existing stations and lines for greater reliability. This investment has paid off already—from 2008 to 2009 alone, the number of service interruptions was reduced

**Status**

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# Status

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by 16 percent, including during the major storms that affected our area. This continued improvement in reliability is a result of the many system enhancements SMECO has undertaken.

In the last 18 months, SMECO has completed three new stations to increase capacity and reliability: the Aquasco switching station, the Holland Cliff switching station, and the Independence substation. The Aquasco switching station, located in Prince George's County, provides a new interconnection with Pepco and enables 230-kV power to flow over two lines to Holland Cliff. SMECO's new switching station at Holland Cliff, completed in the fall of 2009, provides an additional source of power for SMECO's customer-members in Calvert County.

The Holland Cliff switching station, in northern Calvert County, added two new transformers with 225 megavolt amps (MVA) of added capacity to the system. Demand in northern Calvert has increased substantially, and added capacity is necessary to manage the high demand expected this winter. The Independence substation in Accokeek added one transformer with 37 MVA of capacity to the system.

SMECO has upgraded many existing stations, as well. The West Brandywine substation, Westlake substation, and Hewitt Road switching station were all upgraded to add capacity. The Hewitt Road switching station received two new, larger transformers.

Significant line improvements have been made, including the line connecting the Aquasco and Holland Cliff switching stations, which was upgraded from 69 kV to 230 kV. This provides double the capacity available in Calvert County before the upgraded line was installed.

Construction of the Huntingtown substation is underway together with a transmission line along Hunting Creek and Bowie Shop roads, which will connect the Huntingtown substation and Holland



*The second transformer for the Hewitt Road switching station was energized on May 7, 2010.*

Cliff station. This transmission line is needed to transmit added capacity by winter 2010 to meet load demands in Huntingtown and provide power to the Huntingtown substation currently under construction. The transmission lines were constructed to have the least impact to the residents of Hunting Creek and Bowie Shop roads while maintaining safety and reliability standards. The engineered poles are 60 to 80 feet tall with a concrete foundation. They are self-weathering and they are self-supporting, meaning they do not require guy wires for their stability. By using self-supporting poles rather than the traditional poles with guy wires, SMECO substantially reduced the right-of-way infringement on customer property while still meeting load requirements and accommodating joint-use cable television and phone lines.

We would like to thank all of our customer-members who were affected by these changes. SMECO works hard to have the least impact on our customer-members, while providing the most reliable service. We appreciate your cooperation as we work to create a more durable network for you and your neighbors.

## **Now you can pay your SMECO bill at Walmart**

Pay your bill at any Walmart with an additional fee as low as \$0.88. Just take a copy of your bill to any Walmart MoneyCenter or Customer Service Desk.

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## 23rd Annual Wade-in marks steps to protect the Patuxent

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On Sunday, June 13, 2010, former Maryland Senator Bernie Fowler and the staff at Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum celebrated the 23rd Annual Patuxent River Wade-In. This year marks the first year the event was held at Jefferson Patterson Park, where the continued efforts of Fowler and long-time supporter Tom Wisner were commemorated. Wisner, who passed away earlier this year, was well-known and appreciated for his commitment to the river's health. The team at Jefferson Patterson marked the new location with a plaque detailing the history and goals of Bernie Fowler and his wade-in. Wisner, known as the "Bard of the Chesapeake" was also commemorated with a sign placed out in the water that read "Tom Wisner's Oyster Bar."

The event received a great deal of community support, including attendance by many local and state officials. House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, Maryland State Senator Roy Dyson, Maryland State Delegate Sue Kullen, Maryland State Delegate John Bohanan, and many other local elected officials from Charles, St.

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share their concern for the health of the river.

The Patuxent River is the only bay tributary entirely in Maryland, and Fowler has been known to say that in the 1950s he could wade out to the river up to his chin and still see his toes. When he began the wade-in in the '80s, visibility was less than a foot. With the continued effort of the supporters of the wade-in and other local organizations, the health of the Patuxent River—and ultimately the Chesapeake Bay—has shown remarkable improvement. This year, waders could see almost three feet to their white tennis shoes.

Local non-profit organizations give our citizens an outlet to get involved in helping improve the health of the





river and further the goals of cleaning up our local waterways. One organization, the Patuxent Riverkeeper, releases a report card each year showing the health grade of the river based on the frequency with which

the river is able to meet six ecological targets. As part of the Patuxent Water Quality Initiative (PWQI) begun in March 2008 by the Patuxent Riverkeeper, trained testers monitor 61 sites for nutrients (nitrates and phosphates), turbidity or murkiness, dissolved oxygen, and site conditions (water temperature, bank erosion, etc.), according to the 2008 Patuxent River Report Card. In 2009, the Patuxent River scored a D-. There was a slight improvement from 2008, but not enough to alter the grade.

You have the power to influence future report cards. What can you do to protect local water quality? You can be vigilant about the choices you make that affect our local waterways. Planting trees, picking up trash, and making “green” buying choices are very helpful steps.

“...People can do simple things to protect water by cutting down on fertilizers and pesticides, by recycling, and just getting out into the watershed to find out what’s going on with the water nearest you,” said Cindy Cameron, trained tester for the PWQI.

You could also lend your support to one of the many local non-profits in the river corridor, including the Patuxent Riverkeeper, who will help you stay informed and involved.

Patuxent Riverkeeper also provides free testing kits for nearby waterways and an online portal to upload results and compare them to others. For more information about protecting our local waters, visit [www.paxriverkeeper.org](http://www.paxriverkeeper.org) and [www.chesapeakebay.net](http://www.chesapeakebay.net). For information about a free water testing kit, visit [www.pwqi.net](http://www.pwqi.net), or contact Lauren at [lauren@paxriverkeeper.org](mailto:lauren@paxriverkeeper.org) or 301-249-8200 extension 6.

Hot water is the second-largest energy expense in your home. Save on hot water with a few simple steps.

- Install low-flow showerheads and faucet aerators
- Place an insulating blanket on electric water heaters (if applicable)
- Adjust the water heater temperature to 120° F
- Insulate your exposed hot and cold water pipes
- Wash clothes in cold water
- Fix leaky faucets

## around TOWN

### August 7

#### **Guided Canoe Trip on Parkers Creek**

Sponsor: American  
Chestnut Land Trust

Noon to 3 p.m.

Warrior's Rest Sanctuary

1920 Scientists Cliffs

Road, Port Republic

Reservations are

required. Canoe trips

are physically strenuous,

requiring paddling for

three hours (frequently

against wind and

tides), and may require

participants to help carry

a canoe for up to one-

quarter mile over sand

to access the creek.

410-414-3400

[www.acltweb.org](http://www.acltweb.org)



#### **Children's Bereavement Workshop**

Sponsor: Hospice of  
Charles County, Inc.

9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Hospice Office, 105

LaGrange Ave, LaPlata

Any child between the

ages of 6–12 who have

experienced the death

of a loved one are

invited to attend.

Register in advance.

301-934-1268

[hospiceofcharlescounty.org](http://hospiceofcharlescounty.org)

#### **Point Lookout**

#### **Lighthouse Open House**

Sponsor: Point

Lookout Lighthouse

Preservation Society

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Point Lookout State Park

Scotland, MD

Docents from the Point

Lookout Lighthouse

Preservation Society

will be on hand to



Visit [www.smeco.coop/community/aroundtown](http://www.smeco.coop/community/aroundtown) for more events.

answer your questions. No charge to enter the lighthouse, however standard park entrance fees apply.

301-872-5688  
[www.PLLPS.org](http://www.PLLPS.org)



### August 14

#### Non-native Invasive Plant Removal Training Day

Sponsor: American Chestnut Land Trust  
Saturday, August 14

9 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
676 Double Oak Road  
Prince Frederick

410-414-3400  
[www.actweb.org](http://www.actweb.org)

#### Drive Thru Chicken Dinner

Sponsor: Bay District Volunteer Fire Department Associates

2 to 6 p.m.  
46763 Shangri La Drive/  
Company 3

\$10 per dinner  
[www.bdvfd.org](http://www.bdvfd.org)

### August 20

#### Steak & Shrimp Dinner

Sponsor: American Legion Post #221

5 to 8 p.m.  
21690 Colton Point Road  
Platters and sandwiches are both available — eat-in or carryout.

301-769-2220, 301-769-4346  
[www.alpost221.webs.com](http://www.alpost221.webs.com)

### August 22

#### Bull Roast

Sponsor: American Legion Post #221

Noon to 4 p.m.  
21690 Colton Point Road  
Sliced beef and minced beef barbecue, baked beans, potato salad, cole slaw and applesauce — all you can eat. Music is being provided by Spoon Creek. All proceeds benefit Legion programs.

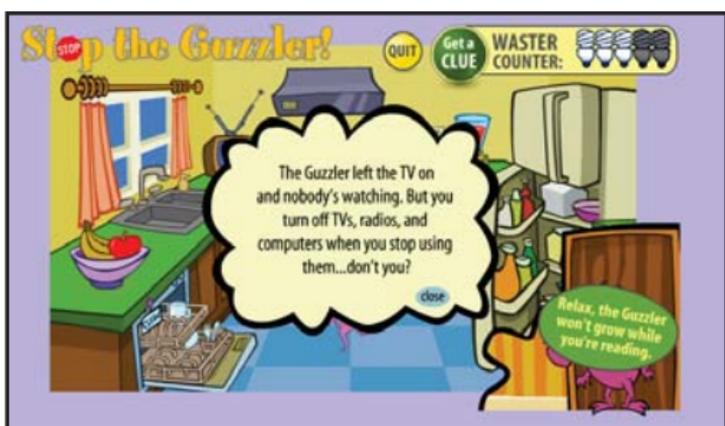
301-769-2220/301-769-4346  
[www.alpost221.webs.com](http://www.alpost221.webs.com)

# Teach your children how to help save energy and save money this summer!

Looking for a fun way to involve your children in cutting down on electrical use in the home and making smart electric safety choices?

Take them on a trip to energy efficiency world at [www.smeco.coop/eew](http://www.smeco.coop/eew) or electrical safety world at [www.smeco.coop/esw](http://www.smeco.coop/esw). The sites feature games and useful information provided in a fun format, as well as resources for parents and teachers.

Fun games, like Stop the Guzzler and Ecoracer, teach kids ways to cut energy use and protect the environment. Checklists and Energy-Saving Calculators also help them understand the true costs of leaving the lights on when they are not in the room, or opening that door too often while the heat or air conditioning is running.



[www.smeco.coop/eew](http://www.smeco.coop/eew)  
[www.smeco.coop/esw](http://www.smeco.coop/esw)

Want to share an energy-saving idea?  
E-mail [jonna.jones@smeco.coop](mailto:jonna.jones@smeco.coop)

Want to learn more about  
our energy-saving programs?  
1-888-440-3311 or [www.smeco.coop/save](http://www.smeco.coop/save)