

cooperative REVIEW

for members of Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative

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SMECO hosted its 72nd Annual Members' Meeting on September 1, 2010 at the Blue Crabs Regency Furniture Stadium in Waldorf. More than 1,500 customer-members attended to vote for their Board members and enjoy the planned festivities.

Safety a must for customers' pets

Utilities require safe access to your property for many reasons. Checking meters and performing necessary repairs and upgrades rank among the top reasons SMECO employees would enter your property.

A priority for our workers when visiting your home is their safety and a positive interaction with you, our customer-member. Our meter readers are trained in a variety of procedures

Pets

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Pets

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to ensure these goals.

With over 27,000 known customers with dogs in our service area, training in dog

safety and behavior is one of the components of our safety program for our many field employees. SMECO has even arranged for knowledgeable speakers, including representatives from Charles County Animal



Control, to share their insights during training.

Part of this training includes how to interact with dogs to make them feel at

ease with the employee to help prevent dogs from acting aggressively. Unfortunately, interaction with each dog is a judgment call and each dog reacts differently to every person. SMECO employees, and contractors who work with us, are asked to notify the appropriate staff about any incident where a dog appears aggressive or threatening, especially if any action is taken. When there is an issue with a customer-member's animal, our team works on solutions to ensure both the safety of the animal and our employee. The first step SMECO usually takes in the event that an animal appears dangerous is to try to contact the property owner and make additional arrangements to gain access to the meter at the property. This keeps the employee safe, and it keeps the pet and its owner happy.

If an employee feels threatened, he or she is permitted to use pepper spray, or whatever means necessary to avoid dog bite or injury. This is an option given to our employees to be used in extreme situations.

SMECO maintains detailed information on service locations to ensure our field employees have adequate information to safely and effectively enter your property. SMECO welcomes calls from our customer-members to alert us to a dog in residence and will work with our customer-members to ensure a safe environment for both your pet and our employees.

SMECO is closing its White Plains office

SMECO is working on ways to streamline and enhance how we do business in order to serve our customer-members most efficiently. As of December 30, 2010, the White Plains office will close to the public and service personnel located there will be moved to our expanded Hughesville campus. To ease the transition, we will shift to reduced hours at the White Plains office prior to the final closing date.

- The White Plains office will be open from 8 a.m. to noon from November 1 through December 30.
- Hughesville, Prince Frederick, and Leonardtown offices will remain open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Although our White Plains office is closing on December 30, SMECO wants you to know that your convenience is still our priority. We have many alternative bill-payment options available.



- 1. Pay by Mail**
- 2. Pay Online**
- 3. Pay by Phone**
- 4. Pay Automatically**
- 5. Pay through Global Express**
- 6. Pay at a SMECO office**
- 7. Pay at Walmart**

SMECO does not charge to use any of the above options. External fees may apply.

Correction from the August 2010 Cooperative Review article "College scholarships awarded." Joy Williams is the daughter of Judith and Brian Williams of Waldorf.

SMECO holds 72nd Annual Members' Meeting

More than 1,500 people turned out for the 72nd Annual Meeting of Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative (SMECO), held September 1, 2010. This marks the second year that SMECO held the Annual Meeting at the Blue Crabs Regency Furniture Stadium in Waldorf. During the event, members voted for SMECO directors.

The Cooperative had 1,045 members register to vote, with 204 of them voting by absentee mail-in ballot. Incumbents were re-elected for three-year terms to SMECO's Board: W. Michael Phipps of Calvert County; Gilbert O. Bowling and Richard A. Winkler of Charles County; James A. Richards of Prince George's County; and P. Scott White of St. Mary's County.

SMECO's president and CEO, Austin J. Slater, Jr. reviewed the co-op's activities of the past year and responded to questions from the audience. Slater touched on the construction of a new building in Hughesville, EmPOWER Maryland energy-saving programs and rebates, and renewable energy.

Slater discussed SMECO's proposed rate adjustment, the construction of power lines and substations to improve reliability, and the co-op's plans for an automated metering infrastructure pilot project. Slater also described how SMECO has reduced expenses by having fewer employees, by ending the defined benefit pension plan for employees to save more than \$40 million over the next ten years, and by



▲ SMECO employee DeDe Pullen shows a sample meter testing device.

enlisting 34,000 customer-members who each save SMECO \$5 a year by paying their bills online.

The evening's program included a hot line demonstration that the Co-op's safety division conducted to educate members about staying safe around electric lines. SMECO linemen also demonstrated a hurt-man rescue.

Entertainment included the Port Tobacco Players' Encore Kids, the Southern Maryland Boot Scooters, and Sam Grow, a local performer and the son of a retired SMECO employee. The Reverend John Howanstine of Christ Church in Port Republic gave the invocation, the Great Mills High School Navy Junior ROTC presented the colors, and SMECO employee Theresa Dorsey sang the national anthem at the beginning of the meeting.



Members who registered to vote were eligible to win one of 50 electric bill credits of \$35 each.

▶ *Jerome Proctor of Brandywine, Betty Johnson of Solomons, and John McInerney of Waldorf each won a U.S. Savings Bond.*



▶ *Mark Clark of Owings won the well-traveled SMECO vehicle, a 1997 four-door Chevrolet Cavalier.*



plug into Green

Your electric bill reflects the power consumed in your home. If you are facing high bills in spite of conservation efforts, a defective electrical device could be the cause. Common culprits include:

- A faulty well pump or thermostat
- A freezer that keeps cycling
- An electric water heater that is leaking or has a defective heating coil
- An air conditioner or heat pump that is low on Freon, or a heat pump with a faulty component

Ensure your home's appliances, heating and cooling systems, and water heater are in proper working order to keep energy use low.

around **TOWN**

November 6

Holiday Craft Fair

Sponsor: Catholic Daughters
Court St. Peter's #1618

8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

St. Peter's School

3310 St. Peter's

Drive, Waldorf

Free admission.

301-843-8916

Annual Craft Bazaar

Sponsor: Good Samaritan
Presbyterian Church

9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Good Samaritan Church;

13025 Good Samaritan

Drive, Waldorf

Crafts, baked goods, and
"white elephants."

301-843-1335

Annual Fall Dinner

Sponsor: All Faith Church

Noon to 5 p.m.

Mechanicsville VFD Hall

Carry-out available. \$

301-884-3773

Craft and Apple

Dumpling Fair

Sponsor: Good Shepherd
United Methodist Church

9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Good Shepherd

United Methodist

Church, St.

Charles, Waldorf

Crafts, collectibles,

and apple dumplings.

301-934-3635



November 7

Fall Dinner

Sponsor: Immaculate
Heart of Mary Church

Noon to 5 p.m.

Immaculate Heart of
Mary Church, Lex. Park

All-you-can-eat dinner,

including entrees of

stuffed ham, fried oysters,

and crab balls. \$

301-863-8144

www.ihmrcc.org





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

November 13

Craft Show

Sponsor: St. John
Vianney Catholic Church

9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Main Street, Pr. Fred.

Hand-crafted items

410-414-9099

www.sjvflc@chesapeake.net

La Plata UMC Annual Craft and Bake Sale

Sponsor: LUMC United
Methodist Women

9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

La Plata UMC Fellowship

Hall, 3 Port Tobacco Rd.

Profits will be donated to
UMW outreach projects.

301-934-3157

www.laplataumc.com

Fall Afternoon Tea

Sponsor: La Plata VFD
Ladies Auxiliary

1 p.m.

La Plata Vol. Fire Dept.
911 Washington Ave. \$

Reservations required.

301-392-9066

November 26–27

Hearth & Home in Early Maryland

Sponsor: Historic
St. Mary's City

10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Historic St. Mary's City,
Rt. 5. \$ Children five and
under—free.

800-SMC-1634

240-895-4990

www.stmaryscity.org



FESTIVAL OF TREES

Sponsor: Friends of Hospice

November 26–28

Calvert County

301-751-4158

November 26–29

Charles County

301-934-1268

November 27

St. Mary's County

240-538-8076

Home Performance with ENERGY STAR® improves whole house efficiency

Home Performance with ENERGY STAR takes a whole-house approach to reducing energy use while improving a home's comfort. Instead of tackling energy problems individually, such as replacing an old heating and cooling system or fixing leaky ductwork, Home Performance with ENERGY STAR looks at a home as one system and recommends improvements for better, more comprehensive results.

How It Works

A certified home performance contractor conducts a comprehensive energy audit of your home. The audit includes a visual inspection and several diagnostic tests using specialized equipment.

The contractor recommends improvements specific to your home and provides details on the associated energy savings and financial incentives available from SMECO.

With your approval, your contractor installs the recommended energy efficiency improvements, and you start enjoying the benefits of an energy-efficient home.

Want more information?

For a list of approved contractors, visit:

www.smeco.coop/save
or call **1-877-818-4094**

MEA: 410-260-7655
www.energy.maryland.gov

Visit www.energystar.gov and follow the link at the bottom for information on tax credits available for energy-efficient purchases for your home.

ENERGY STAR Hotline:

888-STAR-YES (888-782-7937)