

cooperative REVIEW

for members of Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative

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SMECO begins installation of first smart meters

We have initiated the first phase of our smart meter project, which includes installation of electronic smart meters in one section of St. Charles, as well as installation of the supporting base stations that will communicate with the new meters.

Smart meters are digital units capable of two-way communication, and collection of energy-use data. These meters will record

Smart meters
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La Plata High School took first place in the Southern Maryland Regional High School Computer Bowl. Pictured from left are team members Geordan Lane, Matt Koontz, Alex Smith, and Alexandria Bendebba, and coach Richard Williams. Read more about the Computer Bowl on page 4.



Smart meters

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electric energy use and transmit that data to SMECO at regular intervals. In the future,

customer-members with smart meters will be able to monitor their energy use and make more informed energy choices because smart meters have capabilities standard meters do not, such as voltage monitoring, outage detection, and on-demand meter readings.

Base stations are also being installed to enable the smart meters to communicate with SMECO.

Currently, we have installed five base stations. Each station is placed near an antenna at one of our



substations and all of the data that will be transmitted will be encrypted for security.

Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) technology has the potential to help us save money, provide customers with more useful information regarding energy use, and respond more efficiently to power outages.

According to a recent Brattle Group study, the benefits of replacing existing metering infrastructure with smart meters far outweighs the initial investment for the new equipment. “In all cases, additional benefits would accrue as customers participate in specific smart meter-enabled program offerings, including household energy use information delivered to customers in real time via in-home devices and web portals; dynamic pricing with and without technology options, such as programmable thermostats with display information; direct load control with measurement and verification; and electric vehicles with a time-varying rate,” according to The Brattle Group’s article.¹

The initial portion of our smart meter project will be used to measure the cost savings associated with the new metering system. Benefits include reduced costs for meter reading, fewer customer visits, and improved operational efficiency. As a co-op, whenever we reduce our costs, those savings are passed on to you, our customer-members.

Senior living community upgrades energy efficiency

Residents of the Cedar Lane Senior Living Community in Leonardtown can now save money and stay more comfortable thanks to their new Package Terminal Air Conditioner (PTAC) units. The PTAC units were possible thanks to a \$50,000 EmPOWER Clean Energy Communities Program Grant the senior living community was awarded in July 2010.

“The Maryland Energy Administration was pleased to be able to include Cedar Lane Apartments in our recent round of EmPOWER Clean Energy Communities Program Grants,” said Dean Fisher, Energy Efficiency Program Manager for the Maryland Energy Administration. “By upgrading to new energy efficient heating and air conditioning units, Cedar Lane is doing their part to bring Maryland closer to meeting its goal of reducing energy consumption by 15% by 2015.”

This grant is part of the EmPOWER Maryland initiative and is funded through the Strategic Energy Investment Fund (SEIF). SEIF funds come from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI). The SEIF fund statute requires that 50% of all energy efficiency funds be used for low-income to moderate income Marylanders. The grant funds were divided up among the Maryland counties with \$50,000 available for St. Mary’s County for the grant period of March 1–September 30, 2010.

Through the grant, Cedar Lane was able to replace 70 of the 101 PTAC units in 51 apartments. The PTAC units account for 68 percent of an apartment’s electric bill. The new units are expected to provide



Cedar Lane resident Annie McCully talks about the benefits of her new PTAC unit and thermostat with Dean Fisher.

Community

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SMECO sponsors 22nd High School Computer Bowl

Ninety-six young computer experts participated in a contest of knowledge and skill during the 22nd Annual Southern Maryland Regional Computer Bowl, held March 5 at Theodore G. Davis Middle School in Waldorf. Sponsors for the Computer Bowl are SMECO, the College of Southern Maryland, Booz Allen Hamilton, and the public school systems of Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's counties.

Winners received plaques and trophies. System Planning Corporation awarded water bottles to winning team members, and Charles County Technology Council gave each of them hats. The College of Southern Maryland awarded the four first-place winners with \$500 scholarships and Booz Allen Hamilton awarded the first-place team with an Apple iPod Touch for each member.

George Matisick, a community volunteer who is retired from St. Mary's County Public Schools and served as an integral part of the program's success, announced his retirement from the program. Matisick has assisted with developing the test and programming questions for the past 22 years.

The second-place winners, from Northern High School, are (from left) Tim Bohannon, Kyle Sherbert, Kyle Siefring, and Eddie Crouch, and coach Eric Stroh.



The third-place winners, from North Point High School, are (from left) coach Joe Greenawalt, and team members Thomas Watts, Ian England, Bryn Alston, and Sean Danek.



Nominating Committee to meet in June

The 2011 Nominating Committee—appointed at the March meeting of SMECO’s Board of Directors—will meet on Saturday, June 4, 2011 at 9 a.m. to select candidates for SMECO’s Board. The meeting will be held in the Board Room of SMECO’s Executive Building in Hughesville, Maryland.

Customer-members interested in being nominated by the committee should submit their application by Friday, May 27, 2011, to SMECO, Attention: Joe Densford, Board Attorney; 15045 Burnt Store Road, P.O. Box 1937, Hughesville, MD 20637. Alternatively, a member may submit a petition, signed by any group of 15 or more SMECO members, no later than Friday, June 24, 2011. All candidates, including those running by petition, must complete a Board of Directors Candidate Application. To obtain an application, contact Patty Tennyson at 301-274-4489 or patty.tennyson@smeco.coop.

The following Board seats will be open: one in Calvert, one in Charles, one in Prince George’s, and two in St. Mary’s. Board members will be elected at SMECO’s Annual Meeting on Wednesday, August 24, 2011.

Selection of Nominating Committee members complies with SMECO’s bylaws. For more information regarding the committee, nominations, and director qualifications, refer to Article IV, Sections 4.02 and 4.03. A copy of the bylaws may be obtained from any SMECO office.

Call before you dig



Call Miss Utility by dialing 811 before you plant a tree or shrub, start a garden, or install a fence. SMECO will mark the location of underground power lines on your property. One call will save you a lot of time, trouble, and money. It could also save your life!



plug into
Green

Know what you want before you open the refrigerator door

Decide what you want from inside the refrigerator or freezer before you open the door so you don't waste electricity by standing there looking inside.

EmPOWER yourself, EmPOWER Maryland
www.smeco.coop/save

around **TOWN**

May 1

XXV Spring Fling

Classic Car Show

Sponsor: St. Mary's
Rod & Classic Car Club

8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Leonardtown Square

Live music and family
entertainment.

Rain date: 5/8

301-994-9666

Parish Dinner and Festival

Sponsor:

Immaculate

Conception Church

Noon to 5 p.m.

Immaculate Conception

Church Parish Center,

28297 Old Village Road,

Mechanicsville

301-274-1931/301 884-3123

immaculateconception

mechanicsville.com

Bull Roast

Sponsor: American Legion

Post 221, Avenue

Noon to 4 p.m.



21690 Colton Point Rd

Music will be provided by
Spoon Creek.

301-769-4346

May 7

Maryland House & Garden Pilgrimage 2011 Tour in Calvert County

Sponsor: Maryland House &

Garden Pilgrimage; County

Host: Calvert Garden Club

10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Scientists'
Cliffs, Visit early summer
cabins and other homes
and gardens. **\$ Admission**

443-624-1366

www.mhgp.org

9th Annual Plant Sale

Sponsor: Summerseat Farm

8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Summerseat Farm, Rt. 235,

Mechanicsville

There will be children's
activities, a petting zoo,
food, manor house tours,
and information

301-373-6607

www.summerseat.org



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

May 14–15

The Garden Fair at Sotterley Plantation

Sponsor: Historic Sotterley

10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Sotterley Plantation, Hollywood. Featuring demonstrations, vendors, and all things garden-related. **\$ Admission.**

Children under 12 are admitted free.

301-373-2280

www.sotterley.org



May 21

Camp Sunshine

Sponsor: Hospice of Charles County

9 a.m.

Melwood's Kamp-A-Komplish near Nanjemoy

A free, one-day bereavement camp for children 6 to 12 who have experienced the death of a loved one.

301-934-1268

hospiceofcharlescounty.org

May 22

Quarter Mania Auction

Sponsor: Hollywood Vol. Rescue Squad Auxiliary

Doors open at noon, games start at 1 p.m.

Hollywood Volunteer Rescue Squad

Children must be

accompanied by an adult and must have a paid admission. **\$ Admission.**

301-536-0619

Historic St. Mary's City Beerfest

Sponsor: Historic St. Mary's City Foundation

Noon to 6 p.m.

Historic St. Mary's City

All proceeds from this event will go toward the education and research programs at the museum. Free parking.

\$ Admission

240-895-4977

www.stmaryscity.org

Community

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an 18 percent energy savings or 15,607 kilowatt hours over the old units, which will translate into an estimated savings of \$13,000 per year in energy costs.

Beverly Stickles, President of Cedar Lane Apartments, said, "It's extremely fortunate for these residents, especially in a year when there is no social security increase. These energy-saving appliances will help lower their electric bills and any financial assistance we can provide to these very low-income seniors is a great asset."

Stickles said she was thrilled that her team found this grant and that Cedar Lane was eligible to apply. "Being awarded the funds was very invigorating to the staff and especially the residents who feel that someone is looking out for them and their well being."

Resident Annie McCully likes the new units in her apartment and said "they are so quiet, it's wonderful!" Michael Kuffler agreed. He and his wife share a two-bedroom apartment and he said the units are quiet, run better, and they're happy that they no longer have to turn the TV volume up while the units are running. The residents have not yet received their first electric bill but are anxious to see what savings will result from the installation of the new units.

Need to reach us?

Your local phone book has a long list of numbers to contact SMECO and it can get confusing knowing which number to use.

To reach our call center, call **1-888-440-3311**.

To report an outage, call
1-877-74-SMECO (1-877-747-6326).

Visit us online at **www.smeco.coop**.