

cooperative REVIEW

for members of Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative

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Utility pole impact can be costly

Accidents happen. You may be driving in inclement weather, a deer may run out in front of your car, or any number of unfortunate factors could lead to an auto accident. When a utility pole is involved, it can be costly.

Utility poles have varying types and amounts of equipment—as well as live wires—to manage during what are usually extreme weather and traffic conditions. SMECO's top priority is to maintain the

Poles

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SMECO joins the Youth Tour. From left to right: Nicole Williams, Gwynn Park High School; Jordan Goldstein, Patuxent High School (in back); Kaitlyn Dunklee, Leonard Hall Junior Naval Academy; Kaitlin Bonaro, North Point High School; and Natalie Brown, SMECO. Read more about the Youth Tour on page 3.



safety of the public and its employees, but we must also coordinate with other utilities, follow state and county highway regulations, work with Miss Utility, and limit power outages to our customers.

When a car hits a utility pole, repairing the equipment is a time-consuming and dangerous process. SMECO tries to keep the lines energized so that customer-members in the area do not experience a service interruption.

Multiple crews may be required to safely remove the energized lines and all other existing equipment from the pole, remove the damaged pole, set a new pole, and reinstall all of the equipment back in place.

If cable or phone lines are attached to the pole, SMECO must coordinate with the other utilities that need to remove and restore their lines, as well. If the existing pole location is unusable, we must notify Miss Utility prior to digging a new hole, which may cause a two-hour delay.

Who pays for utilities to make these repairs? The person responsible for the accident is responsible for the costs associated with repairing the damage, and they will be billed for the total cost: labor, including any overtime, the cost of equipment, and all other associated expenses. These expenses can be thousands of dollars.

If you are involved in a collision with a utility pole, stay in your vehicle—even if the pole appears undamaged.

“It’s best to remain in the vehicle. Wait for the power company to let you know when it’s safe to get out,” according to Bill Lawman, SMECO’s Electric Operations and Construction Manager.

Don’t assume the area is safe, even if you do not see downed wires or damage to the pole. The pole may be broken, and it could fall. If you must get out, jump as far from the vehicle as possible with your feet together. If you do leave the car, do not go back until the utility company tells you it’s safe.

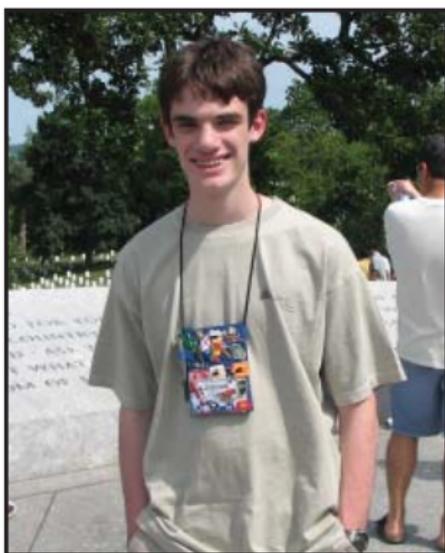
The Youth Tour takes on D.C.

Each year, SMECO takes four local high school students and joins other cooperatives from around the nation at the Youth Tour in Washington, D.C. This year Kaitlin Bonaro, Kaitlyn Dunklee, Jordan Goldstein, and Nicole Williams joined chaperone and SMECO employee Natalie Brown from June 12 through June 16 for the 2011 Youth Tour.

The goal of the Youth Tour is to help students learn more about our government in action during their week-long study tour of the nation's capital. Students are selected based on counselor recommendations and adherence to established criteria.

Jordan Goldstein was also selected as the Youth Leadership Council delegate for Maryland. He represented the Maryland electric cooperatives during the annual Youth Leadership Conference held in Washington, D.C. in July.

Jordan will be a featured speaker at the 2011 SMECO Annual Members' Meeting, and he will also have the opportunity to attend the 2012 NRECA Annual Meeting in San Diego, California in 2012.



Jordan Goldstein will represent SMECO and Maryland electric cooperatives as a Youth Leadership Council delegate.

Cooperatives began sending students to Washington in 1957. As many states began sending students, the NRECA decided to coordinate the program and send all of the students from the various cooperatives at the same time. The first year of the coordinated tour was 1964, and approximately 400 young people from 12 states attended. Since that time, the Youth Tour has continued to grow, and in 2011, there were over 1,800 young people and chaperones in attendance from 44 states.

Smart meter project moves forward with MDM system

SMECO began our smart meter project in March 2011 by initiating the installation of the new meters in the St. Charles area of our service territory. As of July, 640 smart meters have been installed with an additional 250 meters scheduled for installation before the end of the summer. SMECO has also installed over 1,000 smart meters in the Solomons Recreation Center, Naval Electronics System Engineering Activity (NESEA) at Webster Field, and the Naval Air Station Patuxent River as part of their electric system's privatization.

The next step is instituting the meter data management system (MDMS), which will allow SMECO to enhance its service delivery and achieve operational savings while enabling the ability to offer its customers time-based rate structures. We have signed an agreement with Siemens Energy, Inc. and eMeter Corporation for their eMeter EnergyIP® system. SMECO selected this system for its proven capabilities and our team is currently working on integrating this new system with our existing operational and customer service systems. The MDMS, in conjunction with the smart meters, will give customers more options, information, and greater control over their electric consumption and energy bills.

Electric meter bases now at your local electric supply house

Beginning September 1, 2011, SMECO will no longer provide meter bases for new homes and businesses or for those having their electrical systems updated. Electricians and electrical contractors who install wiring and electric panels in homes and commercial facilities will now be able to purchase a SMECO meter base at their local electric supply house.

The new process is the most direct method of distributing meter bases, and more convenient for electricians, who can now eliminate a step in the process of installing new meter bases.

\$5,000 reward offered— report copper theft

SMECO is partnering with Crime Solvers of Charles County to offer a reward of **up to \$5,000** for information leading to the arrest and indictment of individuals who steal copper wire from the electric distribution system in Southern Maryland.

Copper theft is a growing problem in the U.S. and it has hit Southern Maryland. Stealing wire from the power system is illegal, and it can be deadly. It places the perpetrator and others at risk.

“People don’t realize how dangerous it is to steal copper wire from an electric system—it is not worth your life,” said Austin J. Slater, Jr., SMECO president and CEO.

Bottom line: It costs you money. It’s dangerous. It’s illegal. It disrupts your service. **Report copper theft.**

Please call 1-866-411-TIPS
(1-866-411-8477) to report a tip.
All tipsters remain anonymous.

The Crime Solvers Board of Directors, comprised of citizen volunteers, determines the value of the information based on each case.

Most of the electric utilities in the area have made their meter bases available through electric supply houses for many years. SMECO is now adopting the practice. Meter bases will continue to be manufactured to our specifications and labeled with our name. Be sure the appropriate meter base is installed. If a contractor installs a meter base that does not comply with the Co-op’s requirements and does not have the labeled SMECO name, SMECO will not install an electric meter.

The Maryland Public Service Commission approved SMECO’s new meter base process on June 29, 2011.



Is Your Business Ready for Summer?

- Use programmable thermostats or facility controls properly: automate air conditioning systems and cut back on cooling when buildings are unoccupied.
- Inspect and maintain cooling system equipment.
- Use ENERGY STAR® qualified office products.
- Involve co-workers and employees.
- Measure and manage energy use: understand how and where energy is used as well as what drives energy use.

Source: www.energystar.gov

around **TOWN**

September 3

RiverFest

Sponsor: St. Mary's River Watershed Association

10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Historic St. Mary's City Hands-on outdoor activities, environmental information, good food, and entertainment.

Free admission.

301-862-3517
SMRWA.org

September 10

"Affair at Point Farm"

9th Annual Benefit Dinner & Auction

Sponsor: Friends of Jefferson Patterson Park & Museum

6 to 9 p.m.

Live and silent auctions, delectable food and drink, and entertainment.

Proceeds benefit JPPM public programs and events. Please call for reservations. **\$ Admission.**

410-586-8515
www.friendsofjppm.org

September 17

The Fourth Annual Walk for the Poor

Sponsor: Saint Vincent de Paul Society

9 a.m., Father Andrew White School, Leonardtown Live music, post-walk brunch, face painting, and door prizes. The Health Connections staff will be available to do blood pressure checks.

301-904-7990
walkforthepeer.com

September 17-18

Lighthouse Challenge

Sponsor: Chesapeake Chap., U.S. Lighthouse Society

8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Tour one or all of the lighthouse attractions along the challenge route. Receive a souvenir at each, and a special souvenir for visiting them all. Some will charge admission fees.

410-437-0741
cheslights.org



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

September 18

Taste of St. Mary's

Sponsor: St. Mary's County Chamber of Commerce

Noon to 5 p.m., The Square in Historic Leonardtown.

Sample items from restaurants and food vendors, some available for as little as \$1. Free entertainment and children's activities.

Free admission.

301-737-3001

smcchamber.com

September 22

Woodland Indian Discovery Day

Sponsor: Historic St. Mary's City Foundation.

11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Historic St. Mary's City
Try the skills that allowed Maryland's native people to survive, and explore their rich culture.

\$ Admission.

240-895-4990

stmaryscity.org/events.html

Homeschool Day—

Civil War in St. Mary's

Sponsor: Historic St. Mary's City Foundation

10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Historic St. Mary's City

Learn about wartime with activities that provide a glimpse of two Civil Wars. Special thematic educational activities are offered. Discounted admission rates.

240-895-4990

September 24

Appraiser Fair

Sponsor: St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Piney Parish

10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

4535 Piney Church Road

Appraisers will be available to give a verbal statement of value to your items. **\$ Charge for items.**

301-645-5000

pineyparish.org



Celebrate 100 years of naval aviation at the 2011 Air Expo

Come join us in celebrating 100 years of naval aviation during the Air Expo '11 at the Naval Air Station Patuxent River. The Air Expo will be held over Labor Day Weekend, September 3–4, 2011.

The event will feature performances by the Blue Angels, the Golden Knights and the Air Force F-16 East Coast Demonstration Team. There will also be exciting demonstrations from top civilian performers, vintage static displays, and live entertainment to mark this year's 100th anniversary of naval aviation. This event is designed to educate and entertain air show attendants. Food, drink, and memorabilia will also be on sale throughout the day. Parking and admission are free.



www.paxairexpo.org