

cooperative REVIEW

for members of Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative

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SMECO needs access to meters

Are you making renovations, enclosing a carport, adding a deck, or building a room? If so, please remember that SMECO must have access to the electric meter. SMECO has an electric meter on every house, business, church, shed, or barn the Co-op serves. We read every meter every month, and in order to provide efficient,

Access

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Shown at right are five runs of completed flexible PVC (fPVC) conduit pipe that will be pulled under the Patuxent River as part of the Southern Maryland Reliability Project.



effective—and safe—service to our customer-members, access to electric meters is a necessity.

We will gladly work with you and your electrician to make sure SMECO's electric meter is safely and properly relocated when you are making renovations to your home or business. Improperly enclosed meters can be a safety hazard, an inconvenience, and an eyesore. But a properly located meter is accessible, reliable, and safe.

Meters should not be blocked by decks, walls, or vegetation



Keep meters accessible and free of plants, like these examples



Join SMECO online

Your convenience is our priority

SMECO offers many convenient ways to pay your bill. The online bill payment option enables customer-members to manage their accounts online from paying bills to viewing statements when logging in with a secured user name and password. In addition, customer-members can make a one-time bill payment using the Pay My Bill feature, a quick and easy way to pay your electric bill without logging into your account. You can even pay your SMECO bill with your smart phone or tablet.

AutoPay is another useful tool for busy Co-op members as it is a convenient way to have your SMECO bill paid automatically from your checking account or credit card.

More power over your power

The SMECO Home Energy Reports web portal provides detailed information about your home's energy use and helps you discover ways to save money and make your home more energy efficient. The web portal is available to all residential SMECO customers (excluding net metered customers). To access the portal, visit www.smeco.coop and follow the link or visit smcc.opower.com and create a password-protected login using your SMECO account number.

We want to hear from you

SMECO has always been available in person or on the phone to answer questions or talk to customer-members. The online world has offered many additional channels of communication where our customer-members can be heard. Whether you are a friend on Facebook (www.facebook.com/SMECO.coop) or a Twitter follower (www.twitter.com/somdelectric), we are available to answer questions or share useful information. The online communities are especially helpful during major storms, as SMECO works with other community agencies to aid Southern Maryland. Visit SMECO's YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/somdelectric) for tips on how to save energy and save money, and much more.

Postal increase is costly— sign up for e-bills

The U.S. Postal Service has proposed a planned increase in the price of first class mail by three cents beginning in January 2014. This may not sound like a substantial amount of money, but it could make a hefty impact on the cooperative.

Of our 154,000 customers, approximately 96,000 receive paper bills each month. The additional 3 cents per mailing would add about \$2,880 per month and up to \$34,560 per year.

SMECO offers a variety of services online, making it possible to perform a lot of tasks electronically. One of these features is electronic bill payment. When you sign up to pay your bill electronically, the monthly billing statement is emailed to you, saving money every month on printing and postal fees. The e-bill service is safe and secure. If you are interested in signing up for online bill payment, please visit smeco.mysecuredservices.com or visit SMECO's website at www.smeco.coop and follow the link.

Already signed up for electronic bill payment but still receiving a paper bill? You can log in to your e-bill account on www.smeco.coop and click the “Go Green!” button on your account overview. When the paperless billing option appears below, simply select “Go Green!” to stop receiving a paper bill. Little changes can add up to big savings.

1 We don't want you to miss out!
Getting your bill electronically also means your newsletters come that way too. [Read the latest.](#)

For further details, click the plus sign to the left of your account number. [Export to Excel](#)

Account Number	Service Address	Account Balance	Due Date	Current Bill	Pay My Bill	Paperless Billing
+ 0000000000	123 Apple Lane	\$0.00	10/3/2013	View	Pay Now	Go Green!

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Account Number	Service Address	Account Balance	Due Date	Current Bill	Pay My Bill	Paperless Billing
- 0000000000	123 Apple Lane	\$0.00	10/3/2013	View	Pay Now	Go Green!

Paperless Billing Members Helping Members

Paperless Billing offers the convenience of receiving a notification by email when your statement is available to view, while contributing to a greener community by no longer receiving a paper bill in the mail. By selecting Paperless Billing, you will no longer receive a paper bill in the mail. You can turn your paper bill back on at any time.

Paperless Billing. I prefer to receive my bill by email.

Paper Bill. I prefer to receive my bill in the mail.

[Go Green!](#)

Sign up for Paperless Billing

Enjoy a safe and happy holiday season

It's the time of year when we gear up for the busy holiday season. SMECO wants to wish you a safe and happy time as you celebrate with family. From Thanksgiving to New Year's Day, please keep safety in mind. Here are a few simple tips to remember.

- ✔ Use only non-combustible or flame-resistant materials to trim a tree.
- ✔ In homes with small children and pets, take special care to avoid sharp or breakable decorations.
- ✔ If you have a live tree, make sure it always has an adequate amount of water, and keep it away from any source of heat.
- ✔ If you use an artificial tree, choose one that is tested and labeled as fire resistant. Artificial trees with built-in electrical systems should have the Underwriters Laboratory (UL) label.
- ✔ Don't use frayed or damaged electric cords, and never use electric lights on a metallic tree.
- ✔ Use no more than three light sets on any one extension cord. Extension cords should be placed against the wall to avoid tripping hazards.
- ✔ Make sure the tree does not block foot traffic or doorways.
- ✔ Turn off all holiday lights when you go to bed or leave the house.
- ✔ Avoid using candles; they are a primary cause of house fires during the holidays.
- ✔ Never nail, tack, or stress wiring when hanging lights and keep plugs off the ground away from puddles and snow.

SMECO cares about your safety. Please have a safe and fun-filled holiday season.



This season, shop for new ENERGY STAR® appliances and make sure to take advantage of rebates from SMECO—learn more at SMECO.coop/save.

If you're considering recycling old, working appliances such as refrigerators, freezers, or room air conditioners, you can schedule a free pickup from SMECO, and we'll award you a \$50 rebate for refrigerators or freezers and \$25 for room A/C units. Schedule a pickup online at SMECO.coop/ApplianceRecyclingRebates or call 866-261-5970 today!



around TOWN

Visit www.smeco.coop/ourcommunity/aroundtown.aspx for more events.

Dec. 6–15

Holiday Madrigal Dinners

Sponsor: Historic SMC State House. Dec. 6–8, and 13–15. Feasting by firelight, beautiful music, and fun with friends! 6 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays. 3 p.m. on Sundays. \$ Admission. Reservations accepted.

240-895-4991
stmaryscity.org

Dec. 6–7

Kris Kringle Christmas Market at the Charles County Fair on the Charles County Trail

Sponsor: Charles County Fair 8440 Fairgrounds Road, La Plata. Music, shopping, and Christmas treats. Open 4 to 9 p.m. on Friday and 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Saturday. \$ Admission or a donation of a nonperishable food item.

301-971-2739
charlescountyholidaytrail.com

Dec. 7

Colonial Christmas

Sponsor: Historic SMC 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Historic St. Mary's City Celebrate the season with the first Marylanders. Enjoy crafts, entertainment, a walking tour of holiday traditions, and games. \$ Admission.

240-895-4990
stmaryscity.org

Greens Sale and Beach Hayride

Sponsor: American Chestnut Land Trust 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Warrior's Rest Sanctuary, Scientists Cliffs Road, Port Republic. Purchase fresh-cut evergreens for holiday decorations, drink hot cider, and take a hayride to the beach.

410-414-3400
acltweb.org/calendar/calpage.cfm

Dec. 7–8

Dr. Samuel A. Mudd House Museum on the Charles County Holiday Trail

Sponsor: Dr. Mudd Society 3725 Dr. Samuel Mudd Road, Waldorf. Step into the Victorian era and visit Santa Claus, and sample Christmas cookies, cakes, and other treats. \$ Admission.

301-971-2739
charlescountyholidaytrail.com

Dec. 7–8

Mount Aventine at Chapman State Park on the Charles County Holiday Trail

Sponsor: Friends of Chapman State Park 3452 Ferry Place, Indian Head. Enjoy the house, refreshments, nature walks, and the sounds of the season with performances from various music groups.

301-971-2739
charlescountyholidaytrail.com

Dec. 14

7th Annual Christmas Market

Sponsor: All Saints Episcopal Church 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. All Saints Episcopal Church, Sunderland. Baked goodies, cocoa, and glüweïn will be available. Rain, snow, or shine.

410-257-7694
allsaints1692.org

Colonial Times Workshop: Evergreen Arrangements

Sponsor: Historic St. Mary's City 10 a.m. to Noon The Shop at Farthings Ordinary Learn how to assemble a beautiful arrangement for either your table or your door. Ages 18 and older. \$ Admission. Reservations required.

240-895-4990
stmaryscity.org

Helping your neighbor can be rewarding

For people who have fallen on hard times, receiving enough money to pay past due electric bills can make a big difference in their lives. By contributing to Members Helping Members, you can help other SMECO customer-members keep their lights on. Members Helping Members is a program where customers in Southern Maryland can help their neighbors who are struggling to pay their electric bills throughout the year.

Giving can be rewarding

As a thank you to our neighbors who lend a hand, customer-members who sign up **between November 12, 2013, and January 31, 2014**, will receive a reward based on their level of giving.

- Every member who enrolls during this period will receive a **free t-shirt**.
- Those who sign up for the \$5 level will receive a **\$15 gift card** in addition to their t-shirt.
- Those who join Members Helping Members at the \$10 level will receive their free t-shirt and a solar charger.

How do I help?

It's easy! Simply sign up to add \$1, \$5, or \$10 to your SMECO electric bill every month. To enroll:

- Call 1-888-440-3311
- Go online at www.smeco.coop/ourCommunity/membersHelpingMembers.aspx
- In person at the customer service counter at a SMECO location