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**SANTEE ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE NEWS**

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**SANTEE ELECTRIC IS AN EQUAL
OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER AND
EMPLOYER.**



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Wholesale power costs increasing



“We have done everything we could to postpone the inevitable.”

THE TOPIC FOR this column will not be a popular one, but it is important. The cost of wholesale power Santee Electric purchases is going up significantly, and this will cause the energy charge we pass on to you to increase by 1 cent per kilowatt-hour (kWh). This is not what you want to read and not what I want to write, but I will explain why and what this means for the average power bill.

There is no question that the cost of everything is going up. The cost of the poles, wires, transformers, trucks and meters we use has gone up significantly in the past five years. However, SEC has taken every cost-cutting measure possible to keep from passing these costs on to you. I am proud to say we have succeeded in absorbing those costs to date.

What we are not able to absorb is a significant increase in the cost of the wholesale power that we buy to distribute throughout our system. You are likely aware that your cooperative does not generate electricity. Rather, we purchase electricity at the wholesale level and distribute it to our members. What you may not know is that roughly 25% of that wholesale power comes from Duke Energy while the rest comes from Santee Cooper. We have seen gradual increases from Duke over the past several years, and we have so far been able to absorb those costs as well. However, Santee Cooper is emerging from a rate lock period with a significant increase for all its customers, including the state's cooperatives. This subject has been covered a great deal in the media and on Santee Cooper's website, so I will not rehash it here.

I want to make one thing clear. I am not blaming Santee Cooper for the increase in the energy charge of Santee Electric Cooperative (as always, I apologize for the confusing, similar names). However, because our wholesale power costs make up 70% of our total costs, and because the Santee Cooper portion is three-fourths of that amount, this latest cost increase ends up being more than we can absorb. Again, it is not the sole reason, just the final straw.

Our base residential energy charge is still 6.5 cents per kWh, but our wholesale power cost adjustment factor (which has been zero or negative for years) is now 1 cent. The residential demand component for the bill is not increasing, just the energy portion. For a 1,000-kWh bill, this amounts to a \$10 increase. We do not take this lightly.

I want you to know we have done everything we could to postpone the inevitable. Changing our rate structure, reducing offices, managing labor costs and many other initiatives have all put downward pressure on rates. At some point, though, there is nowhere else to trim.

If you have any questions or need guidance managing your bills, just give us a call at 1 (800) 922-1604. Thank you.

ROBERT G. ARDIS III
President and Chief Executive Officer

Local all-stars lend a hand

BY JOSH P. CROTZER

Ti'Monti Emanuel is a do-it-all kind of guy. On the football field, the Wilson High School star can play anywhere his team might need him—defensive back, running back, receiver and/or kick returner. That's one reason he was selected to play in the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives Bowl last December.

Two days before the game, however, he flexed a different set of skills to help a Myrtle Beach Elementary School student named Ziy'unique navigate a \$150 shopping spree sponsored by Santee Electric and South Carolina's other Touchstone Energy Cooperatives.

"You get to teach the youth and guide them and find out what they like," says Emanuel. "Ziy'unique told me she likes to read, and I told her to keep reading a lot. That's how you gain knowledge."

Ziy'unique was one of 44 deserving elementary school students from Myrtle Beach Elementary and Myrtle Beach Primary matched with players from each team, North and South, for a shopping spree at a Myrtle Beach Target store. The groups were equipped with a list of items and a \$150 gift card per child. Emanuel and North all-star Peyton Jones help Ziy'unique score clothes, shoes, dolls and book bag.

In addition to Emanuel, local all-stars participating included Camerone Coe (South Florence High School) and Blayne Edwards (Lake City High School).

The shopping spree wasn't the only thing that made game week special. The night before the bowl game, a line crew from Horry Electric set up hands-on demonstrations on the field so the players could explore careers as cooperative



JOSH P. CROTZER

South Florence High's Touchstone Energy Cooperatives Bowl all-star Cameron Coe helps an elementary school student from Myrtle Beach pick out a belt during a shopping spree sponsored by the cooperatives.

lineworkers. Players put on personal protective equipment and took turns using various lineworker tools.

The shopping spree and lineman demonstration were part of a week of experiences for the 86 players participating in the annual all-star game. South Carolina's Touchstone Energy Cooperatives sponsor the bowl game to recognize players for their athletic ability and character.

The North won the game 24-7.

\$500 Annual Meeting Scholarships

Santee Electric Cooperative will award eight \$500 scholarships to high school seniors at our Annual Meeting on April 15. Two awards each will be randomly drawn from applicants in Williamsburg, Clarendon, Georgetown and Florence counties. Please read the eligibility information and requirements before applying. Applications are due by 4:30 p.m. on April 1.

Deadline:
April 1
Enter today!


Mail application to:
Santee Electric Cooperative
Attn: Joanna Arnsmeier
P.O. Box 548,
Kingstree, SC 29556

Requirements/Eligibility

- Must be a high school senior.
- All blanks must be filled out or the application will be voided.
- The application must be signed on the spaces provided and turned in by the deadline of April 1, or it will be voided.
- Applicant must be a SEC member or a child or legal ward of a SEC member. Only one scholarship will be awarded per family per year.
- A student can only receive this scholarship one time. It's not renewable.
- The scholarship monies can be used by undergraduate students to attend, on a full-time basis, any university/college.
- Only high school seniors with a "C" average or better may apply.
- **Selected applicants will be required to provide SEC with an official transcript and acceptance letter to verify their eligibility.**



2025 Annual Meeting Scholarship Application

 Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

Member's relationship to Applicant (if last name is different please indicate reason) _____

SEC Account Number _____ High School _____

GPA _____ University/College Attending _____

I have read and understand all of the above listed requirements for the SEC Annual Meeting Scholarship, and I agree to meet all of them. If I am selected as a recipient, I agree to allow SEC to use my name and/or photo in future promotions.

Applicant Signature _____ Date _____

Guardian Signature _____ Date _____