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**Santee Electric  
Cooperative News**  
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## The difference

**PERHAPS**, if Santee Electric Cooperative (SEC) brought power to your community before you were born, you may not know the cooperative difference.



Some of the greatest aspects of rural living—the trees, the long and winding roads, the comfortable separation between neighbors—are the very reasons our communities

had to wait for electricity decades ago. Investor-owned utilities (IOUs) focused on the urban areas because it was not profitable to build power lines out into the country. Therefore, when the cooperatives were formed more than 75 years ago—to serve those very areas—the founders knew there would be a difference.

### Some of the differences are challenges

The main challenge is the lack of population density. SEC has slightly less than eight members for every mile of line that it operates and maintains. A typical IOU, however, is able to spread the cost of a mile of distribution line over anywhere from 20 to 30 customers.

Not far behind density is the cost of maintaining rights of way—trimming trees. There are numerous areas in our territory where we might have to trim a mile-long tree line to protect the line serving just one home. This is not the case in urban areas. Of course, as you might expect, this level of tree exposure also causes us to get hit harder during storms.

### Some of the differences are positive

Santee Electric's service territory is more than 2,000 square miles—the largest, by far, of any cooperative in the state. What a tremendous undertaking! Rising to such challenges is where the positive differences come into play.

First of all, the cooperatives were not set up to make a profit—to fatten the wallets of investors in the stock market. We were created to serve you—our members. You elect our governing body, you pass our bylaws, and you are the reason we exist.

Equally important is the fact that we serve our neighbors. Our employees go to the same churches, ballfields, restaurants, and grocery stores as our membership. We are not governed by an unknown body in a faraway city. We're right here.

And we welcome you to visit us. While many utilities have taken away the option of in-person customer service, Santee Electric's doors are still wide open. Come in and see us sometime!

I'm also happy to report that we will be holding Member Appreciation Days at our five locations in October. Keep an eye out for those dates, and come see us. We want to show you the difference.

**Robert G. Ardis III**  
*President and Chief Executive Officer*

#### STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION

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