

# DISCOVERING SOUTH KENTUCKY

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## Transportation is vital to South Kentucky RECC's service and safety

Story and photos by Joy Bullock

South Kentucky RECC is one of the largest electric cooperatives in the state of Kentucky. With nearly 7,000 miles of line and a service territory covering all or parts of 11 Kentucky and two Tennessee counties, co-op employees spend a great deal of time on the road.

On average, South Kentucky RECC employees and vehicles travel more than 1 million miles each year providing the best possible service to members. In addition to traveling in the South Kentucky RECC service territory, employees, when needed, travel to other areas, inside and outside the state, to assist with storm restoration efforts.

With that much travel, it is imperative that co-op vehicles be kept well-maintained and tested for safety. It's a big job, and one South Kentucky RECC's transportation team handles well.

South Kentucky RECC Transportation Manager Shane Salyers says he and mechanics Tyler Chriswell and Bobby Flanagan currently maintain 102 large and small bucket trucks, digger trucks, pickup trucks, vans and SUVs. There are also 31 trailers, five side-by-sides, a skid-steer loader and a Bombardier track digger.

"It's a large fleet, and we have it on a regular preventative maintenance



South Kentucky RECC Transportation Manager Shane Salyers, left, shows mechanics Bobby Flanagan, center, and Tyler Chriswell a few of the places they need to inspect for possible leaks on one of the co-op's digger trucks while it is in the co-op garage for regular maintenance.

schedule, which includes oil and fluid checks and changes and brake and tire inspections," says Salyers. "We use preventative maintenance as an opportunity to fully inspect a vehicle and uncover any potential problems, so we can keep these vehicles in the best possible condition and ready to perform. Sometimes a 10-minute fix in the co-op garage when we first find an issue can save a great deal of downtime and money by making repairs then."

The South Kentucky RECC transportation team is on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to assist in the event of an issue, so the co-op can provide service for members without pause.

Another aspect of keeping the co-op's vehicles maintained is having the bucket trucks and vehicles used for line work dielectric tested. South Kentucky RECC Safety Manager Eric Chumbley

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says dielectric testing is extremely important.

“Dielectric testing checks each of our line vehicles for the effectiveness of its insulation and its ability to protect our employees from electric hazards. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires our vehicles to be inspected annually to insure they are safe and up-to-par to operate around high-voltage distribution lines.”

Chumbley adds, “Like OSHA, we are looking out for the health and safety of our employees. In 2022, we plan to expand this to include defensive driving training through Kentucky Electric Cooperatives. Co-op employees went through this training in the past, but in-person training has been limited the past couple of years. We want to bring it back, because trainings like this have



**Bobby Flanagan, South Kentucky RECC mechanic, changes the fuel filter in one of the co-op’s small bucket trucks. It’s regular, routine maintenance that keeps the co-op fleet running at its peak.**

a positive impact on our safety, as well as those we meet on the road.”

So, when you see a South Kentucky RECC vehicle traveling through your area to perform service, know that

these vehicles are kept in the best possible condition and ready to roll at a moment’s notice, so the co-op can continue to provide quality service to our members. **DSK**

## How we restore power

One year ago, South Kentucky RECC’s service territory was hammered with a series of ice and snow events, leaving thousands without power.

South Kentucky RECC is equipped to handle all outages, whether they involve just a few members or thousands of members. Restoring power after a major outage is a big job that involves every employee at the co-op and is more than just throwing a switch or cutting a tree off a line.

During restoration, transmission lines get first priority because they serve large numbers of customers and large geographic areas.

Sometimes SKRECC members may see lights come back on across the street or nearby, but remain without power themselves. One reason is that not all circuits are restored at once, and different parts of a neighborhood may be on different circuits.

Another might be that the restored member’s service comes directly off a primary line, which is repaired first, while the member without power is served off a secondary line. During major storms, some members are unfortunately in areas that are temporarily inaccessible to our crews due to

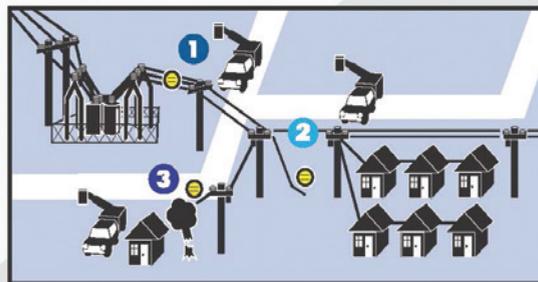
flooding, fallen trees, or where safety is an issue.

South Kentucky RECC begins restoration with the main line feeders, and then works out to the smaller taps and individual lines. The co-op also prioritizes restoration of hospitals and other critical facilities.

Finally, crews work to restore power to smaller or individual outages.

Outages are an unwanted reality; however, be assured that South Kentucky RECC does all it can to provide the best possible service to its members and is prepared for all types of weather and the situations that come with it.

### Steps to Restore Power



- 1** The main distribution line from the substation must be fixed before anyone can have power.
- 2** Next, repair crews fix the lines bringing power to the greatest number of people in the community.
- 3** After larger pockets of members are back on line, crews fix service lines to individual homes.

RANDY BUCKNAM

# Get credits on your bill through SimpleSaver

At South Kentucky RECC, innovation is one of our core values. That's why we want our members to know about an innovative, voluntary program that makes your electric bills more affordable, while helping us deliver power at a lower cost.

It's called SimpleSaver, and it's part of our commitment to energy innovation.

We have two ways you can participate: our Smart Thermostat and Central Air Conditioner programs.

## Central A/C

If your central air conditioner is managed for just a few minutes during peaks, it relieves the strain on the electric system. We will pay you up to \$20 annually for each central air conditioner you enroll. You will receive this bill credit each and every year you remain in the program. Plus, you may receive a sign-on bonus of up to \$10.

## Smart Thermostat

Connected thermostats make it easy to manage your home's energy use. Enroll a qualifying Wi-Fi thermostat in the program to receive \$10 per thermostat (up to two thermostats). If you purchased your thermostat on or after March 2, 2019, you may be eligible for an additional \$100 per thermostat. You

Enroll your connected thermostat and get money back.

HALFPOINT/SHUTTERSTOCK

SimpleSaver

can also earn an additional yearly \$20 in credits at the end of the summer season for participating.

By joining SimpleSaver, you save yourself money and at the same time

help lower the overall demand on the electrical grid.

For more information and to enroll, visit [www.simplesaver.coop](http://www.simplesaver.coop) or call (800) 305-5493.



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South Kentucky RECC is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

**Visit [www.skrecc.com](http://www.skrecc.com)** to pay your bill online, to visit our outage center, or for more information about the Co-op Connections Program.

**To report an outage 24/7/365**, please call your local office, (800) 264-5112, or set up your account to be able to text outages. Please do not report outages via social media.

**Plug into South Kentucky RECC. Follow us on social media:**



# South Kentucky RECC offers healthy savings benefits with Co-op Connections

**A**s we begin a new year, don't forget that South Kentucky RECC's Co-op Connections program offers savings on lab and imaging services, chiropractic, dental, vision and hearing care.

Many insurance plans do not include provisions for these five health benefit areas, but you can save 10% to 60% on eyeglasses, contact lenses and eye exams. You can receive 20% to 40% discounts on a range of dental care services or get 30% off chiropractic treatments.

There are also 35% discounts on hearing aid prices.

We call this package Healthy Savings. At the Healthy Savings website, [www.connections.coop](http://www.connections.coop), you can locate local providers that participate in the program and find detailed information about how to take the maximum advantage of the discounts.



**Billie Smith saved \$1,758 on the cost of braces for her children, Liddie and Davis, through the Co-op Connections program available from South Kentucky RECC. Photo: Tim Webb**

If you don't have access to the internet, please call (800) 264-5112 and someone here will assist you. Or call (800) 800-7616.

At South Kentucky RECC, we're committed to helping you save money during these challenging economic times. The Healthy Savings package will stretch your paychecks. We're always looking out for our members.

## Sam J. Hord Memorial Scholarship

**E**stablished in 1980 in memory of longtime South Kentucky RECC manager (1942-1974) Sam Hord, the Sam J. Hord Memorial Scholarship provides an opportunity for a student who resides in Pulaski County or an adjacent county and demonstrates financial need.

Interested students must be a member of South Kentucky RECC, or a dependent student whose parents are members, to be eligible for the scholarship of tuition at Somerset Community College.

Deadline for the fall semester is generally around March 1. Call Somerset Community College for more information, or visit [www.somersetkctcs.edu](http://www.somersetkctcs.edu) and click the "Affording College" link for the deadline.



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