

Somerset Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

SOMERSET REC

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Somerset, PA 15501
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800-443-4255

Email: e-mail@somersetrec.com
Website: www.somersetrec.com

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Director of Marketing and Member Services

Phil Stern

Manager of Technical Services

Jessi Ditzler

Executive Assistant

OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Friday
7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.

EMERGENCY OUTAGE NUMBERS

814-445-4106
800-443-4255

Making It Easy to Pay Your Electric Bill



JESSICA MAURER

AT SOMERSET RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE (REC), we understand that our members have different preferences when it comes to managing their monthly electric bill. That's why we offer several free, convenient and secure payment options to fit your lifestyle.

SmartHub: convenient and secure

One of the most popular ways members manage their accounts is through SmartHub, which allows you to view your bill, make payments, monitor energy use and receive important notifications — all in one place. Payments can be made using a bank account number or credit card, and members can choose to make one-time payments or set up recurring options. SmartHub is available 24/7 through our website, somersetrec.com, or as a free mobile app.

Auto draft: Set it and forget it

For members who want peace of mind, auto draft is a simple solution. While enrolled in auto draft, your electric bill is automatically deducted from your bank account or charged to your credit card each month on the due date. Keep in mind that when you set up a new bank account or credit card, the draft will not occur until the next billing cycle. An easy way to confirm that your payment will draft is to look at the bottom of your electric bill for the phrase "DO NOT PAY! BANK DRAFT WILL OCCUR ON (date)."

Auto draft helps prevent missed payments and late fees. If you use a credit card for auto draft, it's important to keep your card information current. Expired cards are one of the most common reasons payments fail. Members will receive a letter notifying them of upcoming expiration dates. Be sure to update your credit card expiration date if you receive a new card. This can be done easily through SmartHub or by contacting our office.

Bank bill pay

Many members choose to use online bill pay services offered through their bank or financial institution. This option allows you to send payments directly from your bank account to the co-op. When using bank bill pay, remember that payments may take several business days to process. To avoid late payments, be sure to schedule your payment well in advance of the due date and confirm your Somerset REC account number is entered correctly.

Pay-by-phone

We also offer a secure automated pay-by-phone system. For security purposes, cooperative staff does not accept payments directly over the phone. If you call our office and want to make a payment, we will connect you to the automated system, where you can safely complete your transaction using a credit card or bank account.

Keep your information up to date

No matter which payment method you choose, keeping your contact and payment information current is essential. Updated email addresses, phone numbers, and payment details ensure you receive billing reminders and important account notifications. Keeping your information up to date also helps prevent service disruptions.

If you have questions about SmartHub, auto draft or any other payment method, our billing representatives are always ready to assist you. 📞

JESSICA MAURER
OFFICE ASSISTANT

From the Heart: A Family's Commitment to Fighting Hunger

EMILY BAER, DIRECTOR OF MARKETING & MEMBER SERVICES

FOR KAYLA JOHNSON and her family, giving back isn't just something they do — it's part of who they are.

Born and raised in Somerset County, Kayla and her husband, Jesse, spent the past decade living and working in northern Virginia. Thanks to the rise of remote work, they've been slowly transitioning back home to "SoCo" and reconnecting with the community that shaped them. Along with Jesse's parents and extended family, the Johnsons have been Somerset Rural Electric

Cooperative (REC) members for more than 50 years.

That deep local connection eventually led them to the Somerset County Mobile Food Bank (SCMFB), where they now volunteer regularly, helping ensure neighbors across rural Somerset County have access to nutritious food.

A personal path to hunger relief

Kayla and Jesse's involvement with the mobile food bank began shortly after the family started planning its return to Somerset County. Kayla signed up for email updates from SCMFB and began seeing the need for



HERO'S BRIDGE: Somerset Rural Electric Cooperative members Jesse and Kayla Johnson started their volunteering journey with Hero's Bridge in northern Virginia, a nonprofit that serves senior citizen veterans.

volunteers. Once Kayla took the first step to volunteer with the organization, she persuaded the rest of the gang to follow her. Jesse's cousin, Julie Wisor, decided to jump on the volunteer bandwagon, too.

Jesse's passion for hunger relief started even earlier through volunteer work with Hero's Bridge, a nonprofit that serves senior citizen veterans in Virginia. While working closely with veterans on fixed incomes, he saw firsthand how food insecurity impacts everyday life.

"Many were stretching their budgets further than ever before," Jesse says. "Sometimes that meant skipping meals just to make ends meet."

Those experiences made the mission of SCMFB especially meaningful.

A day spent volunteering at the food bank is fast paced, organized and rewarding, the couple says. About 20 volunteers work side-by-side to unload trucks, set up tables, pack food boxes and load groceries directly into clients' vehicles.

The food bank places a strong emphasis on fresh, healthy options, including produce and frozen proteins.



JOIN THE TEAM: The Somerset County Mobile Food Bank is always looking for volunteers and has opportunities that fit every lifestyle, personality, and physical ability. Visit scmf.org to learn more.



A BOX'S BEGINNING: A group of Somerset County Mobile Food Bank volunteers assemble food boxes for the community.

Families and individuals rely on these distributions to supplement their grocery needs with fruits, vegetables, meat, milk and eggs.

“What surprised me most is how many people we serve each time — and how many volunteers it takes to make it all happen,” Jesse’s mother Patti says.

Reaching rural communities

In a rural county like Somerset, access matters. As household budgets tighten, the mobile food bank plays a critical role in bringing food directly to communities and their residents who might otherwise face long drives to grocery stores.

“In places like Confluence, families could be looking at a 30-minute drive just to reach a main grocery store,” Kayla explains. “Having a mobile food bank with refrigeration allows food to reach smaller towns and removes some of that burden.”

By rotating through multiple locations and offering home-bound deliveries when needed, SCMFb ensures help reaches those who may not have transportation or the ability to travel at all.

Also, the impact of SCMFb’s work goes beyond meals. “It’s the interaction ... the relationships with clients,” Patti says. “Providing nutrition is important, but so is offering dignity and compassion.”

Strengthening the mission through grants

In addition to volunteering, Kayla brings another valuable skill to the table: grant writing.

Her experience began with Hero’s Bridge, where she was mentored by CEO Molly Brooks after becoming deeply involved with the organization’s mission. Kayla learned how effective grants require more than filling out forms; they demand research, storytelling and measurable outcomes.

“Every foundation has a different appetite,” she says. “The key is aligning their values with your mission and backing it up with strong data.”

Kayla hopes to use that experience to support SCMFb by supplementing existing grant applications and freeing up time for Executive Director Ben Tawney to

focus on other critical needs.

“We rely heavily on grants to cover the bulk of our food costs, if at all possible,” Ben says. “With the uncertainty leading into the future, we anticipate having to dip into more donor funds than ever to be able to continue providing the amount of food we do.”

Grants help cover essential expenses beyond food, including truck fuel and maintenance, refrigeration, warehouse improvements, and program expansions.

“They allow donations to go directly toward the mission,” Kayla notes, “instead of buying tires for the trucks.”

Cooperative values in action

One of the seven cooperative principles is **concern for community**, and Kayla believes that principle is at the heart of the mobile food bank.

“This is Somerset County showing up for Somerset County,” she says.

Ben and Kayla’s hope for the future of the Somerset County Mobile Food Bank is sustainability — being able to weather rising costs while meeting the growing demand for services. “We need to make sure we can meet today’s needs so we’re able to expand when and where it’s needed most,” Ben says.

For co-op members and community members looking to get involved, Kayla’s advice is straightforward: Just ask.

“Everyone is welcoming,” she says. “There are volunteer opportunities for every lifestyle, personality and physical ability.”

Whether through volunteering, donating, applying for grants or even sharing a post on social media, every effort matters. Follow “Somerset County Mobile Food Bank” on Facebook or check out its website at scmf.org for the latest food distribution schedule.

“It may sound cliché,” Kayla says, “but every little bit truly does help.”



Clearing the Way to Retirement: Thank You, Phil Read

AFTER 13 YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE, Somerset Rural Electric Cooperative (REC) congratulates Right-of-Way Chief Phil Read on his Jan. 30 retirement.

During his time at Somerset REC, Phil played a critical role in maintaining the safety, reliability and integrity of the cooperative's electric system. As right-of-way chief, he oversaw vegetation management across the cooperative's rural service territory — an essential responsibility in an area where terrain, weather and rapid growth can pose ongoing challenges.

Phil's leadership helped strengthen the cooperative's right-of-way maintenance program, ensuring work was completed efficiently while remaining mindful of landowners, environmental considerations and long-term system needs. He worked closely with crews and contractors to coordinate clearing efforts, supported line personnel during storm restoration, and helped ensure members' power could be restored safely and as quickly as possible.

Known by co-workers for his dependability and steady approach, Phil brought valuable experience and attention to detail to every aspect of his role. He understood that right-of-way work is not just about cutting down trees; it's also about protecting infrastructure, preventing outages and supporting the cooperative's mission to provide safe, reliable electricity to its members.

"Phil Read has been the kind of employee every supervisor hopes to have," says Andrew Phillippi, outside operations manager for Somerset REC. "He's a hard worker with natural leadership skills, and he has a knack for knowing exactly when to be serious and when it's time for everyone to lighten up. The impact of his 13 years here will stick with us long after he clocks out for the last time, and we'll miss the spirit he brought to work every day."

At cooperative celebrations, Phil was known as the employee who was going to have the most fun, throw the best parties and be the "hostess with the mostest."

Equally important was his commitment to communication. He took pride in building positive relationships with

landowners and members, helping them understand the importance of vegetation management and addressing concerns with professionalism and respect.

As Phil enters retirement, the impact of his work will continue to benefit the cooperative for years to come. The systems, practices, and relationships he helped build have strengthened Somerset REC's ability to serve its members today and in the future.

Somerset REC extends sincere thanks to Phil Read for his 13 years of service, leadership and dedication. We wish him all the best in retirement and hope this next chapter is filled with well-deserved relaxation and new adventures. Thanks, Phil! 🍷



A SWEET SEND-OFF: Phil Read recently celebrated his retirement from Somerset Rural Electric Cooperative. Retirement looks good on you, Phil, and thanks for the memories and mentorship.



LEAVING A LEGACY: Phil Read, right, didn't just lead the right-of-way program; he built the next generation. Six of Somerset REC's current linemen were mentored by Phil, and his knowledge and leadership live on through the crews he helped shape. Shown here with him, from left, are linemen Carter Engleka and Andy Nicklow.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE – COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Somerset Rural Electric Cooperative (REC) has \$1,000 scholarships available for local high school students. Funding for the program comes from unclaimed capital credits that were previously turned over to the state. Thanks to the efforts of our political advocates, we can now invest those funds in our communities.

Eligibility requirements

The applicant must be:

- ▶ A graduating high school senior whose parents' or legal guardians' primary residence is served by Somerset REC.
- ▶ A student attending public, private, parochial or home school.
- ▶ A student enrolled or planning to enroll full-time in an accredited post-secondary institution for the 2026-2027 academic year.

How to apply

Visit somersetrec.com, click on "My Cooperative" and select "Scholarships" from the drop-down menu for a fillable PDF scholarship application. Applications are also available at the Somerset REC main office, 223 Industrial Park Road, and in the guidance offices of most Somerset County high schools.

Application deadline

Applications and all required information must be delivered to the Somerset REC office or postmarked by April 1. Scholarship selections will be made mid-April, and award recipients will be notified in early May.

To learn more, email ebaer@somersetrec.com or call 814-445-4106.