

# Somerset Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



One of 14 electric cooperatives serving Pennsylvania and New Jersey

## SOMERSET REC

223 Industrial Park Road  
Somerset, PA 15501  
814-445-4106  
800-443-4255

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

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Clarence B. Waltermire, District 5

### Vice President

Jerry L. Engle, District 4

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Ruston Ogburn  
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Douglas E. Glessner

Manager of Outside Operations

Jonathan Hillegas

Director of Finances

Emily Baer

Director of Marketing and Member Services

Phil Stern

Manager of Metering 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

## Our Response to Seasonal Storms



**RUSTON OGBURN**

**THE SAME LATE-AUGUST STORM** THAT had a tornado touching down in Fayette County entered the western portion of our territory, too, with high winds and severe lightning. The fast-moving storm wreaked havoc on trees in several areas of our system, which brought down power lines and broke poles. Fortunately, once the storm rolled through, the weather cleared to allow crews to focus on their work without more outages arising.

These types of storms cause the most significant damage to our system, so we have plans in place to restore power in the safest and most efficient ways possible when they arrive. Our initial damage assessment plays a critical role in our response. Other factors include the availability of crews, the threat of continued outages from additional storms or ice, and the hours of daylight available.

As we prioritize our work, the impact of each job on our members provides the most important factor in our decisions. This generally leads to restoration work on substations, the three-phase “backbone” and then single-phase taps. Individual service lines and transformers get repaired once the lines leading to them have been restored. We continually assess our progress to determine what changes we should make to adjust to new information.

This storm hit our system at about 2:30 a.m. Dispatchers immediately sent crews to the known three-phase outages to begin their work. We had reports of several broken poles and large downed trees between our Seven Springs substation and Trent with additional outages impacting our Arnold, Clay Run, and Markleton substations.

Throughout the morning, crews restored power to a number of members. Other cooperative personnel patrolled the system to review reports of storm damage and deliver line materials and food to the crews.

We understand our crews’ desires to replace the next pole or clear the next tree to restore power to our members. We also understand the intensity of outage-restoration work requires periods of rest for lineworkers to complete each job safely and efficiently. With weather forecasts indicating no additional storms, we knew the most efficient way to get through this work would be to ensure crews had enough rest to resume working at daybreak.

One area south of Seven Springs had much more damage than our initial assessment revealed. Several broken poles, broken insulators and damaged equipment required multiple crews to work in that area until late into the second day to get those three-phase lines re-energized. This additional backbone work required more time, but crews remained focused on completing the job as they methodically worked through the single-phase and service repairs.

Our employees’ response to this storm showcased their dedication to serving our members. Their prompt action, safety-conscious approach and continuous drive demonstrated their commitment to providing critical electricity, even in the face of nature’s fury. As we reflect on this most recent storm, please know your cooperative remains ready to serve our members, whatever challenges the future may bring. 🌩️

**RUSTON OGBURN**  
GENERAL MANAGER

# Local Contractor Has a Passion for Cooking

**ABBY RETASSIE**, SUMMER INTERN

**FULL-TIME CONTRACTOR, DIE-HARD STEELERS FAN**, co-op member and Shanksville-Stonycreek local Brad Younkin has a passion for cooking for his family, friends, and the public. The owner of Brad Younkin Carpentry and Remodeling, he's also known as "The Cooking Contractor."

Brad started working at the age of 16 at Bub's Big Boy, which was located at the turnpike plaza in Somerset, and has loved cooking ever since.

Brad started The Cooking Contractor, his culinary business, this past year. With the help of his wife, Jessie, daughter, Olivia, and son, Hunter, he was able to turn his dream into reality. He tested the cooking gig at a few local places, including Forbes Trail Brewing near Stoystown and Whitehorse Brewing in Berlin. These "pop-up" appearances were extremely successful — he sold out of food both times.

"The breweries where I sold food had buildings that

I could cook and serve my food out of," Brad explains. "It made it feel like I was in an actual food truck. I have always enjoyed cooking, and I cook all the time at home and on vacation, but I decided to give it a shot at a few places to see how it went.

"It's something different from my contracting business, so it is always a happy place," he adds. "I love making people happy, whether it is my food that I am cooking or carpentry and remodeling."

Brad's style of cooking is smoking and barbecuing. Some of his staple menu items include pulled pork and pit beef sandwiches, smoked potato salad, pasta salad, and smoked macaroni and cheese with bacon. Brad also has created a pulled pork pizza that is quickly gaining popularity on the menu.

"Personally, pit beef is my favorite," he says, "but I love eating everything that I make."

The family owns a lot on Lake Stonycreek, where they enjoy cooking for themselves and hosting family events. They had graduation parties there for their daughter and son and did all the cooking. They also enjoy tailgating with family and friends at Pittsburgh Steelers games and racing events. Brad has also prepared food at local golf outings for hundreds of people.

Brad needs about a day of preparation for his events as it usually takes at least 8 hours for the meat to cook in the smoker. When it comes to their meat, barbecue sauce, maple products and other produce, the Younkins buy locally in Somerset County. They raise their own pigs, buy additional meat at Roof Garden Market, purchase barbecue sauce and maple products from Brantview Farms, and use fresh ingredients to make the best food they can offer.

Last year, Brad was featured on national television. He and his family had the opportunity to host a tailgate at Lake Stonycreek, which premiered on "Emeril Tailgates" on Roku. He made his famous pulled pork pizza.

The appearance went so well, Brad will be featured on the show again this year. He has had the privilege of being the show's only returning guest, alongside his Baltimore Ravens-loving friend Wes Gibson.

**"I love making people happy, whether it is my food that I am cooking or carpentry and remodeling."**



**THE COOKING CONTRACTOR:** Earlier this summer, Brad Younkin made his local debut by serving his smoked meats and sides at Whitehorse Brewing in Berlin, Pa.

“It was an amazing experience. Emeril is a cool guy, and it was a lot of fun to have the opportunity to travel to New Orleans and be on the show,” he says of his second appearance. “The people were great, and they always do such an awesome job.

“Emeril has always been one of my culinary influences,” Brad explains. “I watched him live every day when my kids were little. I just enjoy watching the Food Network in general, as I also enjoy watching Guy Fieri and Michael Simon.”

Brad and his family hope to expand his business with a food truck so he can serve his food at local events and possibly add catering to his business model. Brad feels blessed to have such an amazing family who supports and helps him.

“My son, Hunter, has become really good at cooking,” Brad boasts.

“If it was just Brad and I, I don’t think we could do it,” Jessie says. “My parents, his mom, our nieces, my sister, and anyone who shows up is always willing to help. It has truly been a family affair. Everyone has stepped up and helped with so much, including food prep. It has been such a blessing.”

Visit The Cooking Contractor and his family at an upcoming event and try his famous pulled pork or pit beef sandwiches or pulled pork pizza, along with delicious sides. Also, don’t forget to check out Brad’s current episode on “Emeril Tailgates” and the new episode that will be released this fall for free on Roku. 📺



**FOOD & FOOTBALL:** Brad Younkin and his wife, Jessie, visit New Orleans to film a segment for “Emeril Tailgates.”



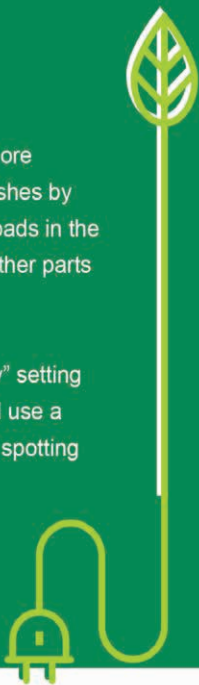
**RIVALRY:** From left, Brad Younkin, celebrity chef Emeril Lagasse, and Younkin’s tailgating rival and friend, Wes Gibson, enjoy the food they prepared during a Steelers vs. Ravens episode on “Emeril Tailgates,” which will be released this fall.

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Did you know using your dishwasher is more energy efficient than washing a load of dishes by hand? To maximize efficiency, wash full loads in the dishwasher and don’t block the arms or other parts that move while the appliance is in use.

For additional savings, turn on the “air dry” setting instead of using the “heat dry” setting and use a rinse aid to help dishes dry faster without spotting and streaking.

Source: Dept. of Energy



# It Pays to be a Member of Somerset REC

**EMILY BAER**, DIRECTOR OF MARKETING & MEMBER SERVICES

## OCTOBER IS NATIONAL CO-OP MONTH.

Electric cooperatives are unique businesses, owned by the consumers they serve. Not many businesses pay you to buy something you wouldn't want to live without (electricity) — but if money is owed to our members, then returning it in the form of capital credits is the correct thing to do.

Unlike for-profit companies, cooperatives do not have shareholders who expect to see profits. Co-ops are not-for-

profit businesses that exist solely to provide their members with a particular service, such as electricity. For cooperatives like Somerset Rural Electric Cooperative (REC), our members are our stakeholders.

“At Somerset REC, the net margins do not belong to us,” explains Office Manager Jonathan Hillegass. “They belong to the members who paid their monthly electric bills.”

When finances allow, Somerset REC retires the capital credits and refunds those retired margins to members. This is an example of the cooperative principle of “members’ economic participation.”

Each year, money is allocated to each member’s account, according to the amount of electricity the member purchased. The more electricity purchased, the higher their share of equity. The co-op sets up a credit account that indicates each member’s share of the year’s net margins.

Generally, members don’t receive a check in the year they earned the capital credits. The current payback cycle is 23 to 25 years. This is because electric cooperatives use their members’ equity to fund system improvements, such as upgrading substations and equipment, and performing right-of-way maintenance. If the co-op didn’t get this operating capital from member payments, it would have to borrow from the bank or another source, which could cause an increase in electric rates.

Do we owe you money? The next round of capital credits will be reflected in the bill you receive in December. Consumers who are no longer members of the cooperative are mailed a paper capital credits check.

The next time you purchase a good or service, take a moment and think about what that product may give you in return 20 or so years down the road. Using electricity in your home remains a good value, and the best part is we’ll pay you back — and *you* get to keep the product. As always, it pays to be a member of a cooperative. 📄

**RECEIVE A \$5 CREDIT  
ON YOUR ELECTRIC BILL BY  
GOING PAPERLESS!**



Enroll in paperless billing through Oct. 13, 2023, to receive your \$5 electric bill credit per account. As a thank you to current paperless members, you will also receive a \$5 electric bill credit per account for helping to keep costs low for the co-op. All credits will be reflected on your November electric bill.

### TO ENROLL:



Download our SmartHub app on your mobile device.



Visit [somersetrec.com](https://www.somersetrec.com) and click the blue Sign-Up button at the top of the home page.

For more information or assistance in going paperless, please call 814-445-4106. Paperless billing gives you the same information as a paper bill, the only difference is how you receive it, and the best part is you'll get a \$5 credit.

## MEMBER APPRECIATION DAY

**Friday, Oct. 6, 2023  
10 a.m - 2 p.m.**

Somerset REC Office  
223 Industrial Park Road  
Somerset, PA 15501