

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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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

The Cooperative Difference in a Time of Grid Stress



**RUSTON
OGBURN**

YOUR COOPERATIVE RUNS ON A straightforward promise: deliver power safely and reliably to members at the lowest possible cost. But right now, demand for electricity and limitations on generation are testing the economic aspect of that commitment in ways we have not seen for generations.

It's simply a math and timing problem. New electricity consumption can be added in about half the time that new supply can come on-line. Across the 13-state PJM Interconnection (PJM) region, which includes Pennsylvania, the imbalance between supply and demand is on the verge of

creating a major reliability issue. To prevent that from happening, costs for new generation and transmission facilities have significantly increased.

Billing calculations in January will reflect the impact of these cost increases for all membership categories. Demand-charge increases will be slightly higher than the kilowatt-hour charges to align with the following wholesale market drivers:

Decreasing supply. On one side of the equation, policy shifts have accelerated the retirement of coal and natural gas plants, while promoting growth in intermittent energy sources like wind and solar. Many of the reliable, always-available plants that powered the region for decades are gone, and replacement resources are not being built fast enough. New projects are stuck in permitting or delayed by supply-chain disruptions.

Exploding demand. On the other side of the equation, electricity consumption is skyrocketing, and it's not just population growth or electric vehicles driving the surge. The real disruptor is artificial intelligence (AI). Across our PJM region, tech companies are racing to build massive, AI-driven data centers — facilities that consume as much electricity as entire cities. Industry forecasts show this demand accelerating over the next five years, with no signs of leveling off. This data center demand is constant and fundamentally changing how much power our region needs.

As a result, we're watching an alarming gap widen between how much electricity people need and how much the grid can deliver. The gap between these two forces is what's driving costs higher across the entire PJM region, including costs for Somerset Rural Electric Cooperative.

While cooperatives strive to provide power at the lowest cost possible, these market forces are pushing costs upward, making a rate adjustment unavoidable. Still, cooperative ownership gives us tools other utilities don't have.

We get most of our energy from Allegheny Electric Cooperative, Inc. (Allegheny), the wholesale power provider we own with 13 other rural electric co-ops in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Through Allegheny, we've invested in generation resources, including nuclear and hydroelectric plants, formalized long-term power-purchase agreements, and even secured millions in federal grant funding to boost our supply of affordable, nuclear power.

This strategy insulates us — and you — from the worst of the market chaos. Through long-term planning, Allegheny continues to deliver some of the most stable, affordable generation rates in the PJM region to our members, even as market prices spike elsewhere.

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A Heavenly Venue for Unforgettable Weddings

EMILY BAER, DIRECTOR OF MARKETING & MEMBER SERVICES

PERCHED HIGH ON a hilltop in Fairhope, Pa., Heavenly View Estate Farm lives up to its name. With panoramic landscapes that stretch across three states and 40 miles of countryside, it's hard to imagine a more fitting place to celebrate love.

Owner and Somerset Rural Electric Cooperative (REC) member Joe Battisto knew from the moment he first saw the property that it was destined for something special.

"The topographical crown of the farm commands a view like no other," he says. "It begged to be a wedding venue."

Battisto owned a neighboring farm when the Heavenly View property came up for sale in 2021. It wasn't long before he sold his property, purchased 305 Heavenly View Road, and transformed it from a private residence into one of the region's most sought-after wedding destinations.

A country-elegant escape

What sets Heavenly View apart from other wedding destinations is that couples can enjoy full, unrestricted weekend access to the property while also having the freedom to bring in their own vendors.

"We don't interfere with their party," Battisto says. "We let them do as they wish."

ALEESA ANN'S PHOTOGRAPHY



JUST MARRIED: Garret and Chloe Foster had a beautiful summer wedding at Heavenly View Estate Farm. Chloe is the daughter of Somerset Rural Electric Cooperative members Robert and Mitzi Foy.

The setting for the ceremony includes 360-degree, long-distance views and serves as a first-class backdrop to capture wedding photos.

"Cocktail hours" then take place on a spacious stone patio, surrounded by lounge furniture and an in-ground pool. The space also features climate-controlled restrooms.

"I don't want my bride and groom to feel rushed," Battisto explains. "They can take as long as they need for each scheduled activity of their day. That's why I say 'cocktail hours,' and not 'hour.'"

Beginning in 2026, couples will also be able to enjoy an 8,000-square-foot white reception tent, illuminated with chandeliers and LED lighting — an elegant new addition to the property's growing list of amenities.

Heavenly View hosts one wedding per weekend between May 1 and Nov. 1, allowing couples the time and privacy to truly savor their celebration.

Freedom, flexibility and family

Couples are drawn to Heavenly View for the freedom and flexibility it offers. Upon booking an event, each couple receives a "suggested vendor list," which features trusted local professionals — from caterers to bartenders to fireworks providers. However, they are under no



RUSTIC ELEGANCE: Every detail was perfect for this unforgettable reception with panoramic views.

obligation to use anyone on the list.

There's also no curfew or early shutdown at Heavenly View. If the disc jockey plays late into the night, the lights stay on and the music keeps going — even if it's 1 a.m. There are exactly two people who decide when the reception party is over: the married couple, Battisto says.

For couples planning an outdoor wedding, his advice is simple: "Pick the venue that best aligns with your vision. Find the place you love and then pick your date."

If the weather doesn't cooperate, there's always an alternate plan. Although rain on your wedding day symbolizes good luck, abundance and a fresh start in life, less than 10 ceremonies have ever had to move under the Heavenly View tent due to inclement weather.

A labor of love

Battisto's favorite moments are the quiet, meaningful ones: Friday night rehearsal dinners shared family-style, watching the couple's family and friends transform the venue together, and seeing months of planning come to life. One memory for him stands out the most.

"A few years ago, the groom had just finished his time in the Army," Battisto says with a smile. "He and his five groomsmen rode down the aisle on horseback and tied their horses to a hitching post during the ceremony. It reminded me of a western-style saloon wedding in the 1850s."

Lasting memories

While Heavenly View's scenic beauty is unmatched, Battisto prides himself most on the experience he delivers.

"I want every couple to feel like they got more value than they paid for," he says.

Battisto considers the Somerset REC territory and much of southwestern Pennsylvania to be the venue's backyard even though the site draws heavily from Pittsburgh, Maryland and West Virginia.

"Often, the bride grew up here and wants to come home to get married," Battisto explains. "As I'm bidding farewell to the couple and their family, my hope is that they felt valued here — that we took their big day seriously."

From the golden glow of pecan-wood farm tables to the simple elegance of traditional weddings, Heavenly View Estate Farm is where timeless charm meets modern flexibility.

Heavenly View Estate Farm is currently booking for 2026, early 2027 and into 2028. For more information about the venue, call or text Battisto at 814-483-9725 or email info@heavenlyviewestatefarm.com. Additional photos can be found at heavenlyviewestatefarm.com. 📸



JUST MARRIED: Gavin and Lindsey Berkley stand at the foot of the cross, ready to begin their happily ever after.

FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

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Cooperation amplifies our impact. Through Allegheny and the Pennsylvania Rural Electric Association, our statewide advocate, we pool resources such as joint purchasing, shared training and coordinated planning to reduce costs. We also work directly with you to manage peak demand — those times when the system is stressed — which helps keep everyone's rates lower.

Safe, reliable, affordable electricity remains our core commitment. While we cannot control regional supply shortages or soaring demand, we can control how we respond. That means making smart decisions to shield our members from the worst of these market pressures and the uncertainty ahead. Our focus will always remain on our members. That is the cooperative difference.

As always, feel free to stop by the office or call us at 814-445-4106 to discuss the impacts during these times of major change. In the meantime, I hope the holidays give you a chance to be surrounded by friends and family. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. 🎄

RUSTON OGBURN
GENERAL MANAGER

Cooperative Gives Back More than Half a Million Dollars to Members

MEMBERS OF SOMERSET RURAL ELECTRIC Cooperative (REC) are receiving a general retirement of \$609,000 in capital credits this month.

Capital credits are a member's share of the margins and are assigned to an account in each member's name. Somerset REC's Board of Directors can authorize the return of a portion of the margins as a capital credits retirement once they determine the cooperative is in stable and adequate financial condition to meet operating costs.

When you signed up to receive electric service from Somerset REC, you became a member and owner of an electric utility. While investor-owned utilities return a portion of any profits to their investors, electric co-ops operate on a not-for-profit basis.

Therefore, each December, instead of returning leftover funds, known as margins, to investors — who might not even live in the same region or state as you do — we issue capital credits to members based on their electric use during a specific period.

If you were a Somerset REC member in 2000, you should have noticed a credit on your electric bill this month. Members in 2000 who no longer live in the cooperative's service territory received a check in the mail.

These credits and payments reflect your ownership of the cooperative during those years, when Somerset REC saved part of what members paid to cover emergency expenses and build and maintain a reliable electric delivery system.

If you established membership after 2000 and are wondering when you will receive capital credits, the current capital credit payback timeframe is 23 to 25 years. Also, if you receive a check in error, please return it to the cooperative office. Thank you in advance! 🙏



MEMBERS HELPING THEIR COMMUNITY: More than 425 Somerset Rural Electric Cooperative (REC) members donated an abundance of non-perishable items for the Confluence Food Bank when the cooperative held its Member Appreciation Day in October. The collection was made possible because of your generosity. Together, we're doing our part to keep shelves stocked at the food bank and hearts full. Thank you for your participation in making a difference. Above, food bank volunteer Charles Younkin, right, and Jarrod Putman, an HVAC technician at Somerset REC, fill up carts of donated items. Not shown: Phil Stern, Somerset REC's manager of technical services, who also helped with the delivery.

2026 DIRECTOR ELECTIONS

The 87th Annual Meeting of members of Somerset Rural Electric Cooperative (REC), Inc., will be held in May 2026.

Somerset REC is proud to have a board comprised of committed and knowledgeable directors who play a vital role in the decision-making process at the cooperative.

Listed below are the three director positions open for election in 2026 at the annual meeting. Directors elected are required to serve a three-year term. The districts up for election are:

- ▶ **District 2:** Allegheny, Juniata, Quemahoning and Stonycreek townships
- ▶ **District 3:** Donegal, Jefferson, Jenner and Lincoln townships
- ▶ **District 7:** Fairhope, Greenville, Larimer, Northampton and Southampton townships

As a voting member, you do not have to reside in one of the listed townships to vote. All members may cast a ballot for the three districts up for election each year.

If you are interested in running for one of these positions, your primary residence must be in one of these areas, and you must be a member in good standing. Please submit to the cooperative, in writing, your request to run for the specific district no later than Feb. 1, 2026.

