



Contact us

**740-653-4422**

**1-800-282-5064**

[www.southcentralpower.com](http://www.southcentralpower.com)

#### Offices

##### Lancaster

2780 Coonpath Road NE  
P.O. Box 250  
Lancaster, OH 43130

##### Canal Winchester

10229 Busey Road  
Canal Winchester, OH  
43110

##### Circleville

2100 Chickasaw Drive  
Circleville, OH 43113

##### Hillsboro

110 Danville Pike  
Hillsboro, OH 45133

##### Barnesville

37801 Barnesville-  
Bethesda Rd.  
Barnesville, OH 43713

#### Office hours

Monday through Friday  
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

#### Outage reporting

When reporting an outage, an automated outage reporting system may answer your call. It may ask for your 12-digit account number to help locate the outage site. This number is found on your monthly bill. It's handy to write it down and keep it near the phone.

#### Suggestions

Please send your *Country Living* story ideas or comments to the attention of Lisa R. Hooker at South Central Power's Lancaster office.

## Trimming future problems

The month of March heralds the official arrival of spring, even if temperatures are cool or a stray snow flurry passes by. But as chilliness gives way to warming temperatures, trees and other foliage soon will be in full bloom.

The cooperative's right-of-way maintenance program is an integral part of our electric system maintenance. This is especially true because of the heavily forested areas in a large part of the co-op's rural service territory.

South Central Power spends nearly \$7 million annually on tree trimming and vegetation control. Each year, the cooperative cuts, trims or treats trees and vegetation on a predetermined cycle. Each annual cycle covers approximately 2,300 miles of electric line, so the entire service territory is covered every three years.

When a tree is cut, its roots are still alive. Re-sprouting is prevented with a follow-up herbicide application.

The cooperative's approach to rights-of-way is an effective and environmentally safe way to manage brush growing around many miles of co-op poles. It's also the premier vegetation control method preferred by industry experts nationwide.

Right-of-way maintenance helps prevent outages and reduces line damage caused by trees. A clear right-of-way makes it easier to locate broken poles, downed lines and other equipment failures, so repairs can be made more quickly.

South Central Power requires a minimum of 10 feet around transformer boxes for underground wire. Depending on the type of overhead line, the co-op usually maintains a 10-foot clearance (20 feet total) on both sides of its poles and power lines.



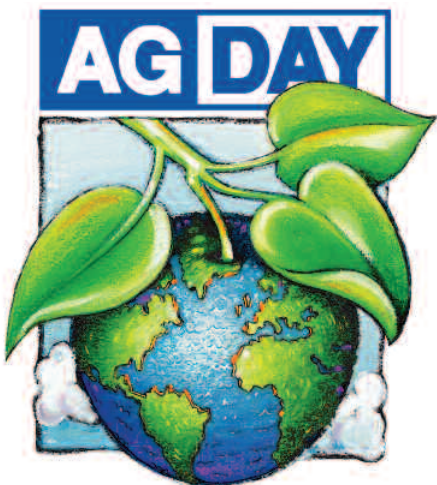
Carefully choose tree varieties for your yard. Learn how tall and wide the branches may grow. Planted too close to power lines, residential trees can cause difficulties during storms and high winds. Helpful information can be found at [www.southcentralpower.com](http://www.southcentralpower.com). Click on Electric Service and then Vegetation Management.

South Central Power makes a concerted effort to work with property owners on tree-related issues. For more information or to alert the co-op of trees on your property that potentially could cause a power outage, contact Vegetation Control Director Tom Lacey at 740-689-6170 or 1-800-282-5064, ext. 6170, or by e-mail at [lacey@scp.utilities.com](mailto:lacey@scp.utilities.com).

## Celebrating American agriculture

While agriculture provides almost everything Americans eat, use and wear, too few people truly understand its contribution. To help remedy that, March 15 is designated National Ag Day.

Americans are encouraged to gain a greater understanding of how food and fiber products are produced, as well as appreciate the role the industry plays in providing safe, abundant and affordable products around the world.



It's also a time to acknowledge agriculture's essential economic role in maintaining a strong economy and to consider agriculture-related career opportunities.

This year marks the 38th anniversary of National Ag Day. It's celebrated in classrooms and communities as part of National Ag Week, March 13–19.

National Ag Day is organized by the Agriculture Council of America,

a nonprofit organization composed of leaders in the agricultural, food and fiber community. ACA dedicates its efforts to increasing the public's awareness of agriculture's role in modern society.

**The American farmer.** Each American farmer feeds more than 144 people. That's a dramatic increase from 25 people in the 1960s. American agriculture is doing more and doing it better. As the world population soars, there is an even greater demand for the food and fiber produced in the United States.

More than three million people farm or ranch in the United States. Individuals, family partnerships or family corporations operate almost 99 percent of U.S. farms. Over 22 million people are employed in farm or farm-related jobs.

Forty-one percent of U.S. total land area is farmland (938 million acres). In 1900, the average farm size was 147 acres compared to 441 acres today.

The top five agricultural commodities are cattle and calves, dairy products, broilers (chickens), corn and soybeans.

**The changing face of agriculture.** Today's farmers and ranchers produce meat lower in fat and cholesterol. Consumers receive better value for their dollar.

For example, a pork tenderloin now has only one

more gram of fat than a skinless chicken breast. Beef cuts today are leaner than 20 years ago, resulting in 27 percent less fat reaching the retail case.

Research and advancements in biotechnology result in tastier fruits and vegetables that stay fresh longer and aren't damaged by insects. A new technique, "precision farming" boosts crop yields and reduces waste. Satellite maps and computers match seed, fertilizer and crop protection applications to local soil conditions.

Farm equipment has evolved dramatically from the team of horses used in the early 1900s. Today's four-wheel-drive tractors have the power of 40 to 300 horses.

As mechanization and horsepower in farm machinery has increased, the time needed to complete tasks has decreased.

Combines, the huge machines used to harvest grains, have dramatically changed agriculture. In the 1930s a farmer could harvest an average of 100 bushels of corn by hand in a nine-hour day. Today's combines can harvest 900 bushels of corn per hour or 100 bushels of corn in under seven minutes.

Learn more at [www.agday.org](http://www.agday.org).

### Getting a tax refund ?

By now, many people already know if they are getting an income tax refund from Uncle Sam.

If you are, consider investing in a security system from South Central Power.

There are various types of wireless sensors to choose from, depending on your needs and home.

Most people choose a combination of sensors to monitor for intrusion, fire and carbon monoxide. Some customers also use a sump pump sensor to detect basement flooding.

All security systems installed by South Central Power are monitored 24 hours a day. When an alarm is activated, the system alerts you, family or neighbors you designate, and the appropriate safety authorities

The components are economical and can be customized for your home or business.

The low monthly monitoring fee also covers normal wear-and-tear maintenance of your system's equipment.

Call South Central Power and schedule a free visit. There's no obligation.

Security systems also are available to people who are not co-op electric customers. If you know someone considering a system, please have them call us at 1-800-282-5064, ext. 6153. We're happy to explain the options offered by South Central Power.

## Set it and forget it: Programmable thermostats

Programmable thermostats are an easy energy-saving tool. They're one of the quickest, easiest and most inexpensive ways to save on energy bills all year.

A programmable thermostat makes saving energy easy by controlling the heating and cooling settings in both the winter and the summer.

It's like putting your house on "cruise control" by using preprogrammed settings that regulate the home's temperature both day and night based on your family's comings and goings. They're particularly helpful during vacations.

This type of thermostat automatically turns down the heat in the winter and turns up the cooling in the summer. A homeowner can save energy and money while still maintaining overall comfort.

Remember, the savings in energy and money will vary by household based on number of people, personal temperature preferences and fuel costs.

Here are a few more energy savings tips:

- Always look for the ENERGY STAR label when buying a new thermostat.
- Review the preprogrammed settings to determine if they can help you maximize your comfort and energy

savings.

- Heat pump systems require a special type of programmable thermostat. Consult with a South Central Power energy advisor or an HVAC specialist to determine what will work best for your heat pump.

- Hiring a certified HVAC contractor ensures the thermostat is installed correctly.

Programmable thermostats offer a lot of value by maximizing energy savings without sacrificing comfort. Best of all, they can be tailored to match your family's schedule.

To learn more about buying and setting a programmable thermostat, contact an energy advisor at your local South Central Power office. Information is also available at [www.TogetherWeSave.com](http://www.TogetherWeSave.com).



## High School Juniors: You could win the trip of a lifetime!

### What is Youth Tour?

It's not just another trip! Youth Tour is an annual contest sponsored by the Ohio Rural Electric Cooperatives, Inc., and your local electric cooperative that gives deserving high school juniors like you the opportunity to use your knowledge and wit to compete for a FREE weeklong trip to Washington, D.C., June 10 to 16.

You'll meet up with nearly 1,500 students from across the country in June if you win. You'll get a chance to meet and talk to congressional leaders from Ohio at the U.S. Capitol, plus you'll get to see all the sights and visit a bunch of really cool places.



### What are the entry requirements?

South Central Power will sponsor two students on this trip. To be eligible to compete, you must be a high school junior whose parents/guardians are members of the cooperative.

### How will the finalists be chosen?

For information on how you can be part of this trip, contact Rita Tate at 1-800-282-5064, ext. 6167.

**Taylor Ashley (left) and Teisa Bieber represented South Central Power at the 2010 Youth Tour.**



## NEWS CURRENTS

## Choose healthier foods without breaking the bank

Rising grocery prices can make trips to the supermarket trying, but eating on a budget doesn't have to mean sacrificing nutrition, food quality or menu choices.

Use money-saving coupons, both from circulars and online. Read the weekly store flyers for current specials.

Processed foods and foods high in sugar, salt and fat tend to be placed in the middle aisles. Plan your shopping along the perimeter of the store for healthier choices.

Read nutrition labels, particularly noting portion size. Be familiar with prices to recognize a great deal. Try generic or store brands. Choose items from each of the recommended food groups of My Pyramid ([www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov)).



### Fruits and vegetables.

Buying fruits and vegetables in season makes them more affordable.

Spring is a great time to try raising a few staples such as lettuce and tomatoes in a home garden. Have a small yard or no yard at all? A number of vegetables can be successfully grown in containers.

If your community has a Farmers Market, try it for locally grown produce.

Don't overlook frozen

alternatives, since many fruits and vegetables are cheaper when bought in bulk. Keep them frozen until they're needed. For the most nutritional value, purchase frozen fruits without added sugar and frozen vegetables without added salt.

When buying canned goods, choose fruits in their own juice or light syrup. Buy vegetables with a minimal amount of salt.

**Whole grains.** For the recommended intake of whole grains, consider buying 100 percent whole wheat or 100 percent whole grain breads whenever they are on sale. Freeze one or more loaves for later use. Other whole grains include oatmeal, brown rice and whole wheat pasta.

**Lean protein.** Protein such as beef, pork, poultry and fish is typically the most expensive item on a grocery list. To reduce costs, try alternate protein sources such as eggs, dried beans and/or legumes for one or two meals each week.

**Dairy.** Usually whole milk, 2 percent milk, 1 percent milk and fat-free/skim milk are priced about the same. For cooking, consider using nonfat milk powder if the recipe allows.

**Cooking.** Cooking healthier on a budget doesn't have to mean sacrificing taste, quality or nutritional value.

Simple things can make a big difference. Remove the skin of chicken. Drain fat from meat. Bake fish instead of frying. Eat more vegetables and less meat to save money.

Experiment with a favorite dish, or seek out assistance on nutrition, gardening and recipe preparation from local resources like your local Cooperative Extension office.

## Older electrical wiring

Unlike fine wine, electrical wiring, outlets and switches don't get better with age. In fact, the older the wiring, the more chances there are for potentially serious electrical hazards.

Wires with broken or little insulation and outlets worn out from years of use frequently are cited as causes of house fires.

If your home was built more than 60 years ago, it is recommended that a licensed electrical contractor inspect your home's wiring and related electrical devices. The inspection is especially important if you have added appliances that use a lot of electricity, such as an air conditioner or dishwasher.

Signs of potential hazards include circuit breakers or fuses that trip often, outlets or switches that are hot to the touch and room lights that dim when other appliances cycle on.

## Official Notice: Medical certifications

Medical certification forms are available upon request from South Central Power for those persons who must certify that discontinuation of electric service would make the operation of medical equipment impossible or impracticable, or that such discontinuation of electric service would otherwise be dangerous to the health and welfare of the persons residing in the household.

In all cases where discontinuation of service would be dangerous to the life and welfare of the occupants within a household, the consumer should contact the cooperative and request a "Medical Certification" form.

This form must be completed and certified by a licensed physician or local Board of Health and filed with South Central Power.