

Going paperless – almost

By **JACK HAMBLIN**
Manager, Southeast Electric Cooperative



PAPERLESS is not just the way of the future, it's here now. Already we can do our banking online, including paying our monthly bills. Checkbooks are almost a thing of the past. Cash stopped being the primary medium of exchange long ago. Credit cards are being replaced with online and automatic payments. It seems like all transactions are now done virtually. And Southeast Electric Cooperative has recently made substantial progress toward less paper. Our recently completed AMI (Automated Metering Infrastructure) now allows for automatic meter reading.

This has eliminated the need for yearly self-billing booklets, for self-read meters and bill calculating by the members. Now, with our newly launched Smart-Hub, usage and billing bills can now be viewed online, and bills can be paid without writing that check or doling out the cash.

I'm sure everyone has not yet embraced this new, automatic method, but it does reduce the paperwork for SECO staff and members, and increases accuracy and timeliness of meter reading and billing. So, it's a good thing. Cutting down on the amount of paper we use is good, right? Of course! Absolutely! Sure! Maybe! Sometimes.

Tye Williams, our assistant manager, is a great proponent of going paperless. And he's a great personal example. He does it with almost everything. While my desktop, drawers, shelves and every other open space is filled with files of every type, his office is quite devoid of files of any type.

While I have many folders neatly organized by name and type, he instead has a computer with three monitors on his desk. I have been quite proud of my ability to access just about any paper document in just a few minutes, only

to have that pride dashed when he can access similar digital documents in mere seconds. I can prepare accurate reports from my large archives in just a few days. He can prepare graphs in beautiful color in just a few minutes.

In the months he's been here, he has shown us all there's a better and faster method of doing business. And I've had to reluctantly admit that my reliance on a printer and reams of paper needs to be a thing of the past.

But maybe there's still a place for some amount of necessary paperwork. Here's a small example. Tye has taken over the preparation of the monthly board meeting agenda. Of course, I have a few files on how the agenda needs to be organized and what items are necessary at certain months of the year.

One particular document I have is a great outline that lists all required agenda items in the month they must occur. I showed it to him one day and he asked me to send it to him. I couldn't because, for some reason, it has never been entered as a computer file, but resides as a sheet of paper in one of my perfect paper file folders.

I said I would make him a copy, but instead, he took out his cellphone and took a picture. I kicked myself, wishing I'd have thought of that first. He put his phone back in his pocket and I returned my piece of paper back in its proper place and filed it properly and orderly.

Since that time, and with my organizational ego sufficiently deflated, I have diligently worked to convert my written documents to digital. I have become more proficient, but have also found myself reluctant to abandon paper completely.

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SOUTHEAST ELECTRIC
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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- District #9 – Albert Paul
- District #3 – Mike Hansen
- District #6 – Karen Kreitel
- District #5 – Clayton Jardee
- District #8 – Dave Hayden
- District #2 – Doug Gardner

OFFICE

- Jack Hamblin, GM
- Tye Williams, Asst. GM
- Robin Kuntz, Office Mgr.
- Rita Williams, Office Asst.
- Vicki Fix, Member Services
- Terri Buck, Custodian

LINE CREW

Mike Dalzell, Foreman

- Jake Hammel
- Adam Kuntz
- William Kalstrom
- Sam Erfman
- Tanner Fix

Dave Johnstone,
 Groundman

SAVE THE DATE
JUNE 11, 2021



SOUTHEAST ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
ANNUAL MEETING

Annual Meeting on June 11 features trustee elections

THE Annual Meeting is June 11, 2021. A nominating committee will be appointed in April. Trustee positions up for re-election are as follows:

District No. 3: Mike Hansen

District No. 6: Karen Kreitel

Further nominations may be made by petition of 15 or more members, acting together not less than 15 days prior to the Annual Meeting. Nominations by petition, received at least five days before the meeting, shall be included on the official ballot. Later nominations received by petition

shall be treated as nominations from the floor. The chairman shall also call for nominations from the floor for a period of one minute during the time for nominations. No member may nominate more than one candidate.

RM

THE CURRENT DIRECTORS:

District 2: Doug Gardner

District 3: Michael Hansen

District 5: Clayton Jardee

District 6: Karen Kreitel

District 8: Dave Hayden

District 9: Albert Paul

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I still admire and cling to my diminishing accumulation of beautiful file folders. So, you can imagine how I felt a few days ago when Tye walked into my office and asked if I still had that piece of paper he had photographed earlier. I must have felt a bit of satisfaction and maybe a small amount of vindication at the request. I matter-of-factly reached into my files, retrieved the document and simply said, "Here, you can take a copy." RM

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Lineworker Appreciation Day

On April 12, remember to
#ThankALineworker.