

SEPB CONNECTION

Summer 2017

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For most people, the arrival of the summer months means long days, cookouts and plenty of sunshine. In the electric industry, it also brings heavy demand as people turn on air conditioners and brings threats to service in the form of severe weather.

Planning ahead is crucial to providing the reliability our customers need, which is why at SEPB, we have nearly completed the rebuild of Roseberry substation near Collins School and completed the engineering for the TVA primary substation on East Willow Street.

Despite being built over 50 years ago, the Roseberry substation is in fine shape structurally. On the other hand, electric equipment, such as breakers and transformers, needed to be replaced to ease the increased load and to keep the station operating efficiently and effectively for another 50 years.

The TVA primary substation, one of two main electricity delivery points into our town, is even older, having been built in the late '50s. SEPB's engineering team is working to ensure it gets the maintenance necessary to continue working at full capacity.

Not only do these projects prepare our system for storm season, but also make us ready for potential growth. New industry in Scottsboro would benefit from these kinds of upgrades to our reliability. In addition, new programs like automated meter reading improve efficiency and convenience for all our customers. The meters will be launching with a new customer portal in the near future, where customers can track electricity usage online in real time.

SEPB also recently installed an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system for the phones,

saving customers time when reporting an outage rather than waiting for customer service representatives. The new system also includes an interactive outage map on the website showing how widespread an outage is. To learn more, visit our website at scottsboropower.com.

These upgrades allow our system to take advantage of the latest technology while preparing it for any growth our city may experience in the years ahead. We're excited to see what

the future holds and look forward to serving you as we learn together.



Phillip Chaney
General Manager
Scottsboro Electric
Power Board.

THREE CHANCES TO WIN!

SEPB is giving away a flat-screen TV, laptop and cordless phone.

When you **upgrade your service** or **sign up for a new service** at SEPB in the months of July and August, you'll be automatically entered to win one of the following prizes:

**WIN A 32-INCH
FLAT-SCREEN TV**

*when you upgrade or
sign up for cable service.*

WIN A LAPTOP

*when you upgrade or
sign up for
internet service.*

**WIN A CORDLESS
PHONE SET**

*when you upgrade or sign up
for phone service.*

**FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN, UPGRADE OR SIGN UP FOR CABLE, INTERNET OR PHONE SERVICE!
CALL 256-574-2680 OR VISIT OUR OFFICE TODAY.**

Scottsboro
ELECTRIC POWER BOARD

DRAWING WILL BE HELD ON SEPT. 14, 2017.





A dedicated worker

SEPB's Brian Ricker has devoted 27 years to SEPB

Brian Ricker loves to work, a passion that has served him well in 27 years at the Scottsboro Electric Power Board, where he is the Electric Superintendent. He oversees all line crews and works with customers to solve any issues.

"I'm a workaholic, and I love to work and stay busy. I don't like to sit around," Ricker says. "This type of job just gets in your blood, and it's hard to get it out. Anybody that does this kind of work will tell you that it's just something you really love to do."

For Ricker, building a nearly three-decade career meant starting at the bottom, working the same jobs managed by the crews he now oversees.

Born and raised in Scottsboro, Ricker graduated from Scottsboro High School before attending J.F. Drake Community College, where he studied to become an electrician.

While he did work for a time as an electrician in Huntsville, Ricker wanted a job closer to home. When he learned of an opening for a lineman at SEPB, he decided to give it a try. He quickly learned a lineman's job was not as similar to that of an electrician as he had thought.

Linemen work mainly outside, and their job is to bring the power into a home or business. Meanwhile, electricians mostly work inside the home or business running wires and utilizing the power.

Once he learned the details, Ricker fell in love with the job and hasn't looked back. He began as an apprentice lineman and then became a field engineer, a construction foreman, an assistant electric superintendent and now an electric superintendent.

His work experience, beginning in an entry-level role, provides him the back-

ground he needs to succeed. "Brian has a wealth of experience in all aspects of the electric operations," says Phillip Chaney, SEPB General Manager. "He is the person we turn to when we need to get things done. He is a take-charge person who is motivated by a crisis. SEPB is fortunate to have such a dedicated and capable employee."

Service orders and customer concerns can make Ricker's days hectic, but things really get busy when severe weather hits. He's seen every kind of weather, including tornadoes, snow and ice, and even an atmospheric gravity wave in 2009.

An atmospheric gravity wave may occur along a very large area of rain when conditions create a wave-like force. Hurricane-level winds are possible. The storm in 2009 caused severe power outages and downed many trees. That storm was the first time



SEPB had to call in outside help to restore power, putting Ricker in charge of his normal crews as well as outside crews.

Ricker keeps close watch on the weather daily, and if severe weather strikes, he directs crews to where they need to go and decides which outages need attention first.

Ricker thrives when making critical decisions. "I love the excitement of the job," he says. "It's challenging. The excitement of the storms and the fast pace of how we do

things — I kind of get a thrill out of it. And I love helping people."

A solid team helps him handle those situations. "The guys that I supervise are terrific, and they are very hardworking and professional. That's what makes my job easier," he says. "I also work with the office staff, and they do a great job of keeping me organized. They actually get all the work orders ready, and I just give them to the crews. My job would be very difficult without them."

Even at home, Ricker still keeps busy, usually woodworking in his free time. He sometimes builds houses.

Ricker enjoys hunting, fishing and riding Jet Skis with his 15-year-old son, Blake. He also attends Randall's Chapel United Methodist Church in Scottsboro.

Ricker has no plans of slowing down. "It's an awesome place to be, and I don't see myself going anywhere anytime soon."

Have you visited our new website?

Go to scottsboropower.com to pay your bill and more

Scottsboro Electric Power Board completely redesigned its website to offer a new, modern experience for its customers. The new site features a simple layout and clear navigation, making it easy for customers of all ages to use its services.

The new site has been fully reimagined with one overriding goal in mind: to make it easier for SEPB customers to do business with their

electric and telecom provider over the internet.

Customers can view internet, television and phone packages, pay their bill and much more.

"We hope everyone will enjoy our new site and use it whenever they need to know something about their electric, cable, internet and phone service, says Vicki Watts, PR/Marketing Manager.



New technology helps SEPB respond faster, allows customers to view outages

The Scottsboro Electric Power Board strives to provide affordable, reliable energy to its customers. However, some outages are unavoidable. SEPB recently upgraded its technology to add a new outage map and Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system. These features will give customers more information about outages as they occur.

This map will also help SEPB locate outages and restore power quicker and safer. Customers may view outage locations on a map of SEPB's service area, and a message may describe the reason for the outage.

"This helps us work more efficiently. If we have severe weather and a lot of trouble calls, our superintendent can see where the outages are," says SEPB Field Engineer Bradley Potter.

"The outage map provides customers with the information they need so they will know where the current outage is located. However, customers should still call to report any information about the outage. Knowing if there's a tree down on a power line, a loud noise or any other problem will help us locate and repair the outage more quickly."

SEPB tested this software for about two years and recently made it public. "We were trying to get it exact so our customers could get the most out of it," Potter says.

Potter says the customers who have used the map are pleased with the results. "It's a great way for them to find out information about an outage," he says.

The new IVR system will allow SEPB to play

a pre-recorded message to customers if they call during an outage and all customer service representatives are helping other callers.

During severe weather with numerous power outages, the IVR system will recognize callers by their phone numbers and then play an automated message with outage information. This system is available after hours.

SEPB is committed to communicating with its customers during outages in other ways, too. Most outages are posted on SEPB's Facebook page and Twitter account.

Visit the new outage map at outages.sepb.net.

We need your number!

Update today for a chance to win **\$50**

To better serve you, Scottsboro Electric Power Board needs your current phone number. Without it, we have no way of contacting you if there is a problem requiring immediate attention. More importantly, our outage reporting system will not be able to link your account with your phone number if you call to report an outage, which could make response times slower.



To update your information, fill out the form below and return it with your bill or drop it off at the office. When you update your information, you will be automatically entered into a drawing to win a \$50 credit on your bill.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone (Home): _____

Phone (Cell): _____

SEPB channel lineup changes

- » **Coming Soon:** The Smithsonian channel, which has only been available in the HD package, will soon be available in the basic digital package.
- » The ID channel is now available on channel 74.
- » The Inspiration channel has moved from channel 74 to channel 99.
- » Hallmark Movies and Mysteries is now available in the basic digital package.

