



Richard O'Hern retires from SEMCO after 44 years

Richard O'Hern, who was born and raised in south Georgia, began his career at Sumter EMC 44 years ago. His career at the Co-op saw him in many different roles, as he started his journey at Sumter EMC on the right-of-way crew. He then moved to the line crew, and ultimately retired as an Energy Service Representative.

In his most recent position as Energy Service Representative, Richard played a very important role of assisting our Members with energy audits and high bill complaints. He was instrumental in developing the current safety program at Sumter EMC. Richard not only worked with many employees but



Richard O'Hern

he also communicated with many Members throughout his career.

Richard will miss the people he has worked with for so many years.

"It will feel very weird knowing a storm is coming in and that I am not preparing for it here at the Co-op," he shares, adding that he has enjoyed witnessing the changes in technology in the electrical industry over the years.

The only plans Richard has for retirement is to be spontaneous and spend time with his family. Richard and his wife, Kathy, have a daughter, Ivy (Chris), and two grandchildren, Hutch and Layla.

Sumter EMC is grateful to Richard for his years of service and dedication to our Members. Congratulations on your retirement, Richard! We wish you many years of happiness.

Sumter EMC issues capital credits to Members

The Sumter EMC Board of Directors authorized the distribution of \$750,000 in capital credits to Cooperative's Members who received electric service during 1984 and/or 2020. With this authorization, these revenues were issued as a bill credit or check

during December 2021.

The Sumter EMC Board of Directors and employees are pleased to be your electric service provider. We are honored to serve our Members and the rural communities you live in.



*Happy New Year
from our Co-op family to yours!*



Sumter EMC

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Warm Kale Salad with Bacon-Dijon Vinaigrette, Blue Cheese and Apples

Recipe courtesy of *Georgia Grown*

- 1 bunch kale, stems removed, leaves torn into 2-inch pieces
- 3 slices thick-cut bacon, sliced into ¼-inch pieces crosswise
- 4 tablespoons olive oil, plus more if needed
- ½ medium red onion, thinly sliced
- 2 teaspoons mustard
- ¼ cup red wine vinegar, white wine vinegar or apple cider vinegar
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 2 ounces of crumbled Georgia blue cheese
- 1 medium apple, diced into ½-inch cubes

Wash kale. Using a salad spinner, spin dry the kale to remove as much water as possible. Place kale in a large bowl (for mixing your salad later) and set aside.

Cook bacon in a very large skillet (one that's big enough to hold all of the kale), until crisp on the outside but still slightly chewy and fat is mostly rendered. Remove bacon to a paper towel-lined plate; set aside. Note: You should have about 2-3 tablespoons of bacon



GEORGIA GROWN

fat left in the skillet, but if not, make up the rest with olive oil. Add olive oil to the bacon fat. Heat over medium heat until hot, then add the onion. Sauté onion until translucent, about 5-10 minutes.

In a bowl, whisk together the mustard and vinegar. Increase the heat under the skillet to high, and add the vinegar and mustard mixture. Note: It will start to boil. While it boils, whisk the hot vinaigrette until mostly emulsified. Remove skillet from the heat.

Add kale all at once to skillet and, using tongs, toss it carefully with the hot vinaigrette so that it starts to wilt and turn bright green. Transfer kale and vinaigrette to a bowl and let it cool slightly. Season with salt and pepper. Note: Salt lightly as the bacon and blue cheese will be quite salty. When kale is cool enough to handle, use your clean hands to massage it so that it continues to wilt and break down to about half of its original volume. Taste and adjust for seasoning. Let the kale sit for about 30 minutes before serving, then transfer it with tongs to the large serving bowl. Top with reserved bacon, crumbled blue cheese, and diced apple. Serves 2-4.

For recipes from farms and producers across our state, visit www.georgiagrown.com.



Walter Harrison Scholarship

Deadline to apply:

Jan. 14, 2022



Sumter Electric Membership Corporation is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Stay warm on the coldest days

January and February typically are the coldest months of the year. That doesn't mean you have to be cold for two months, especially inside your own home.

Dressing in layers, wearing socks with your slippers, and staying active are no-cost, no-tech ways to stay cozy indoors, even when the weather forecasts show freezing temperatures for days.

Also try the following:

- **Block drafts.** If your windows are old or made from a single pane of glass, it's time to upgrade. Energy-efficient glass—and windows with

double panes—will go a long way toward keeping cold air from blowing into your house. They also could reduce the amount of money you spend on winter energy bills.

- **Seal leaks.** Also, great draft-blockers, weatherstripping and caulk can plug holes around windows and doors, and wherever the inside of an outdoor wall is penetrated by a cable or phone line.
- **Make the bed.** An electric blanket—one with an automatic shut-off and the seal of approval from a safety organization like UL—can keep you cozy at bedtime, even when you turn



the whole-house thermostat down to save energy overnight.

- **Make 2022 the year you finally switch to a programmable thermostat** that will turn the heat up when the home is occupied and everyone is awake, and down at bedtime and when the family leaves for the day.



MAKE OPERATION ROUND UP YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION!



Statement of nondiscrimination

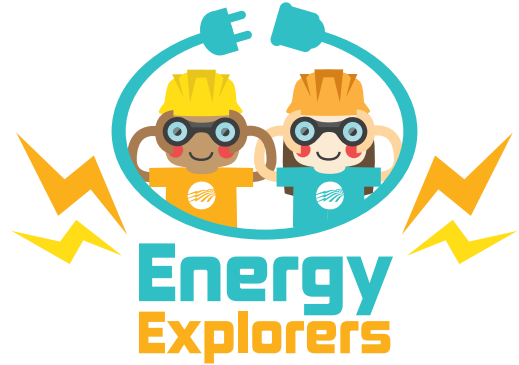
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The person responsible for coordinating this organization's nondiscrimination compliance efforts is Andrea Walker, Vice President, Marketing and Administration, at Sumter EMC. To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at: www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. Complaints must be filed within 180 days of the date you knew or should have known of the alleged discrimination. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

WINTER ENERGY EFFICIENCY CROSSWORD



Did you know there are several ways you can fight the winter chill *and* save energy at home? Complete the crossword puzzle below to learn how to save energy during winter months.

1 Down: Open curtains and blinds during the day to allow _____ in to warm your home.

2 Across: If you have a _____ at home, ask an adult to close the flue when a fire is not burning.

3 Down: Unplug phone and tablet _____ when they're not in use.

4 Across: Instead of turning up the thermostat, wear additional layers of _____ to stay warm.

5 Down: Always turn off _____ when you leave a room.

6 Across: Ask an adult to check the _____ _____ for your home's heating system. This should be replaced regularly.

Answer key: 1 Down) sunlight 2 Across) fireplace 3 Down) chargers 4 Across) clothing 5 Down) lights 6 Across) air filter