

## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

### Sumter Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Barry Bowman, Director  
Corporate Communications & Energy Services  
330 South US Hwy 301 • PO Box 301  
Sumterville, FL 33585-0301

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



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### SECO urges awareness around power lines

Sumter Electric Cooperative (SECO) is urging all of its 170,000 members and their families to be especially vigilant when around power lines. According to SECO officials, every year there are multiple incidents in the U.S. involving some sort of contact with power lines. Already this year, several have been reported in Florida and they usually result in very serious injury or death.

Barry Bowman, SECO director of corporate communications, said, "We are always extremely concerned for the safety of our members and our employees. Some simple precautions can help avoid a potential tragedy."

Bowman cited the following advice:

- Children, trees and power lines don't mix. Never climb or allow children to climb trees in or around power lines. If you become aware of a dangerous situation where a tree is in the power line call SECO and a crew will be sent to eliminate the hazard.
- If you live in an area that has underground power lines, make sure you call 811 before doing any digging. The free call to 811 will result in underground lines being clearly marked by professionals. Digging without calling could disrupt service to your entire neighborhood and could harm you and those around you.
- Always look up when working outdoors. Pay close attention to where the overhead power lines are located. When making roof repairs, cleaning gutters, working on antennas, or simply moving a ladder or other long object be wary of lines within reach and stay well away from them. Assess the possible hazards before you start the job.
- It's storm season, so if you see a downed power line following a storm, stay away and keep others away until SECO crews arrive on the scene. Do not attempt to move a downed power line with any object.

"The military would call it situational awareness. In truth, it's that with some common sense mixed in. A few simple precautions will help insure that this summer is a safe one for everyone," concluded Bowman.

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