

## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

### **Sumter Electric Cooperative, Inc.**

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## **SECO Honored by Arbor Day Foundation**

The Arbor Day Foundation has named Sumter Electric Cooperative as a Tree Line USA Utility for the fourth consecutive year.

The Tree Line USA program is sponsored by the Arbor Day Foundation in cooperation with the National Association of Foresters and recognizes utilities that meet five very strict requirements: a program of quality tree care; annual worker training in best tree care practices; a tree planting and public education program; maintaining abundant, healthy trees throughout the utility's service area and participation in an Arbor Day celebration.

In making the announcement of SECO's award John Rosenow, CEO of the Arbor Day Foundation, said, "Trees are an important part of landscapes all across the United States from an environmental and economic standpoint... Utility providers like Sumter Electric Cooperative are setting a good example about the importance of taking care of a valuable community resource like trees."

Ken Lacasse, SECO Manager of Integrated Vegetation Management, said, "We are very proud to have received this award for the fourth year in a row. We truly strive to be environmentally sensitive here at SECO and our vegetation management program is a prime example of that. Trees enrich our lives. They help reduce peak demand for electricity by conserving energy. Trees clean the air and water, increase property values and make our homes more comfortable."

Of special note is the fact that SECO was the first utility in the state to submit the 2010 required application and quantifying data to the Florida department of forestry for approval. The co-op's Tree Line USA application was not only approved by the state, SECO's application was used by state forestry officials to create a higher standard which all remaining utility applicants will have to meet in order to be approved.

The Arbor Day Foundation is a nonprofit educational organization dedicated to tree planting and environmental stewardship. SECO is a not-for-profit utility serving 172,000 members in their families in Marion, Citrus, Sumter, Lake, Levy, Hernando and Pasco counties.

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