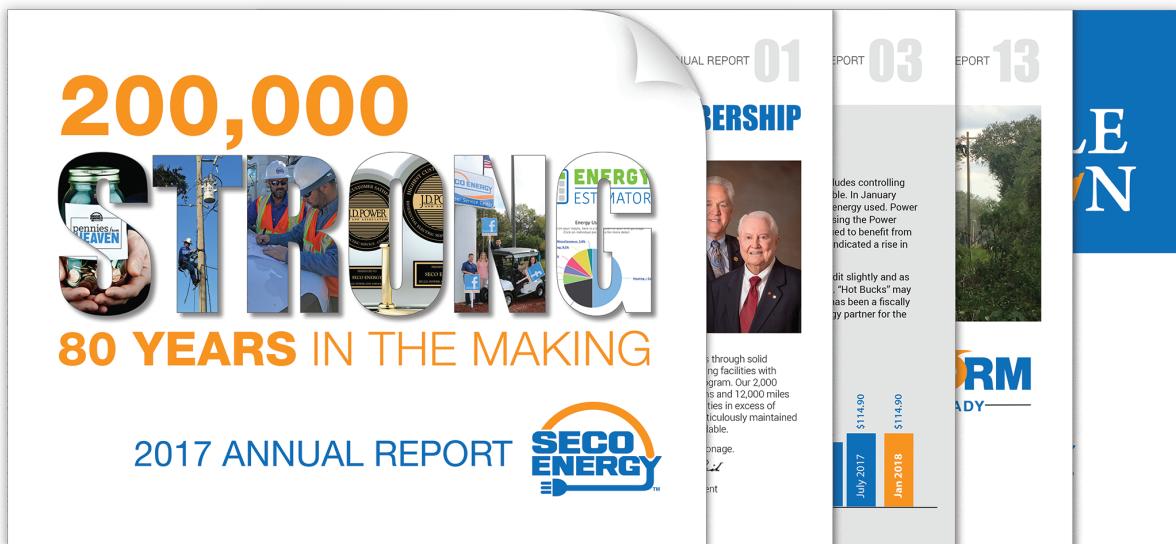


SECO News

APRIL 2018



Dear SECO Energy Members,

In this edition of Duncan's Digest, I want to bring your attention to our newly released *2017 Annual Report* which details the cooperative's strong fiscal performance. Members who attended our March 24 Annual Meeting received a hard copy. It's also available at SECOEnergy.com>Newsroom>Annual Report. Read it and then click over to Facebook to play Annual Report Trivia for a chance to win a \$300 bill credit.

Find the answers to the trivia questions in the pages of the *Annual Report* related to our cooperative's history, ASCI score, J.D. Power awards, the Board of Trustees and our robust financial performance. The trivia contest runs from March 26 through May 6. 858402

To give you a head start, the excerpt below also appears on page 1 of the *Annual Report*. The first clue appears in the first paragraph. Answers to the other questions appear in other *Annual Report* pages.

SECO Energy's beginning was humble. Prior to President Franklin D. Roosevelt's 1935 Rural Electric Act, also known as the

DIGEST cont. on page 2...



DUNCAN'S DIGEST

Jim Duncan, CEO

TRIVIA QUESTIONS:

1. What year was our cooperative formed?
2. What is SECO Energy's 2017 ACSI score?
3. How many consecutive years has SECO Energy won a J.D. Power award?
4. How many Trustees make up the SECO Energy Board?
5. Per the Balance Sheet, what is the 2017 value of SECO's Total Electric Plant?

HVAC TUNE-UP TIME

HVAC efficiency increases with a clean filter and annual service by a qualified technician. Your unit will operate more effectively and thus reduce your electric usage. If your technician suggests you need a new unit, you are welcome to contact SECO for a free second opinion before committing to the purchase.

One of our certified Energy Services Specialists will visit your home to inspect your unit and provide a written assessment. Schedule an appointment today by visiting [SECOEnergy.com](https://www.secoenergy.com) > [Contact Us](#). Select "Request Energy Audit" and submit your contact information. We'll be in touch within just a few days.

757402

DIGEST from page 1...

REA, a home powered by electricity in rural Central Florida was only a dream. With low-interest loans from the REA, local farmers and ranchers formed Sumter Electric Cooperative, Inc. in 1938. A small group of original SECO employees started the utility from scratch, installing poles and stringing miles of electric line. On November 12, 1938, SECO turned on the lights to 400 rural homesteads in our service area. Before the close of 1938, additional homes in nearby areas were electrified. For these rural Floridians, quality of life changed dramatically.

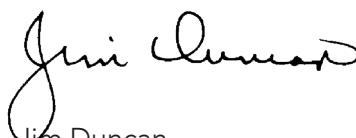
Over the last 80 years, SECO has grown alongside the communities it serves. We've morphed from a small, rural utility to one of the fastest-growing cooperatives in the nation. SECO achieved a significant milestone in late 2017 when the

cooperative energized its 200,000th meter. Today, SECO Energy is "200,000 Strong – 80 Years in the Making."

Members without internet access can request a copy of the *Annual Report* and trivia questions mailed to you. Return the answers to SECO by May 6 for entry in the \$300 bill credit drawing. [427405](#)

It is our privilege to serve as your energy provider. Thank you for your membership.

Sincerely,



Jim Duncan,
Chief Executive Officer

SIZE MATTERS – SELECTING A GENERATOR

Thinking about installing a generator before Hurricane Season? Follow these important safety warnings:

- 1** A qualified electrical contractor must perform the installation of an emergency generator, disconnect and transfer switchgear. This is not a DIY job.
- 2** Only an electrician is qualified to connect a generator to an electrical panel. You could be electrocuted and also endanger our field employees.
- 3** Always follow local, state and national fire and electric codes. Permits are required.
- 4** Once installed, always disconnect from your metered electric utility service before starting your backup generator. [951701](#)
- 5** Never run an electric generator inside a building – even in a garage. It is a hazard and violates safety codes.
- 6** Store gasoline and diesel in approved containers out of the reach of children. Never fuel the generator while it is running.
- 7** Extinguish all flames and cigarettes when handling fuel.
- 8** Ensure proper ventilation and airflow around the generator.
- 9** Stage a fully charged, approved fire extinguisher near the generator.
- 10** Use extension cords free of exposed wires and frayed shielding.
- 11** Never remove or tamper with a generator's safety devices.
- 12** Do not attempt to repair a generator. A qualified technician should perform repairs and service as needed.
- 13** Generator engine parts are very hot during operation. Severe burns may result. Keep children away at all times.
- 14** Generators are sold by power output measured in watts. Before purchasing, discuss your home's size/watt needs with a knowledgeable retailer.

Hurricane Season begins on June 1. Get ready today!



961800

“HIDDEN” ACCOUNT NUMBERS

Don't forget to look for the last six digits of your account number in this month's *SECO News*. You can email us at customerservice@secoenergy.com or call if your number appears. Six winners will be drawn at random from all submissions. Winners receive a \$25 restaurant gift card.

The burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia floridana*) is one of our smallest owls, standing just nine inches tall with a wingspan of 21 inches. Unlike other owls, this owl is a ground dweller, preferring open fields and prairie-type areas well away from trees. It spends most of its time on the ground foraging or guarding its burrow which is where it gets its name. Camouflaged brown plumage helps it blend into its surroundings. It has bright yellow eyes, but no ear tufts and longer legs. This raptor needs open fields and short, herbaceous ground cover, like pastures, golf courses, or agricultural fields. It can be spotted during the daytime standing erect and on guard at the mouth of its burrow or perched on a fence post. Once disturbed, the owl clucks or chatters its displeasure and bobs its head in agitation. Burrowing owls often fly in a wavy, up and down fashion as if negotiating an invisible obstacle course. It can also hover in mid-air – an effective technique used for capturing prey. Florida's warm climate provides this owl with plenty of its favorite foods: grasshoppers, beetles, mole crickets, small rodents, earthworms, lizards, frogs, toads, snakes, etc. 775013

In Florida, burrows are used year-round. While the owls sometimes use gopher tortoise or armadillo burrows, most pairs excavate their own, which may extend four to eight feet underground. Burrows are lined with grass clippings, animal feces and decorative pieces of shell, feathers or trash.

Nesting begins in the fall and peaks in the spring. Four to ten unmarked white eggs are laid over a one-week period. Three to four weeks later, hatchlings are born covered with grayish-white down and eyes closed. Chicks emerge from the burrow after two weeks. Although proficient fliers at six weeks, chicks typically do not leave their parents until about 12 weeks old.

Both the eggs and young are at risk to predators, snakes, opossums, raccoons and skunks. Nests may be lost or destroyed by construction activities, malicious destruction by people, or by flooding during heavy rains. This owl is classified as "Threatened" by the Florida Fish & Wildlife Commission primarily due to the loss of native habitat. Burrowing owls and their eggs are protected from harassment and/or disturbance by state law and protected by the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

*Column & photo
by Sandi Staton –
sandi.staton@gmail.com*



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The Board of Trustees will meet on Monday, April 23, 2018 at 2:30 p.m. in the Corporate Offices at 330 South US HWY 301 in Sumterville. A Trustees' meeting will also be held on Monday, May 21, 2018.

24/7 Job Hotline: (855) 483-2673
www.secoenergyjobs.com

Report an Outage: (800) 732-6141
www.secostormcenter.com

