



Meet Your SEC Employee: Ed Bethel



**District Operations Supervisor
5 years of service
Powhatan Office**

By Lloyd Lenhart, Community Relations Coordinator

It is a career and not just a job." That's a crucial piece of wisdom Ed Bethel likes to share with his younger coworkers, as well as with his children.

Bethel grew up in Florida surrounded by family members who served in the military or worked for the local cooperative. Bethel grew up to do both. He first started working as a lineman when he enlisted in the Air Force after high school; he was with the Air Force's power production section. While in the Air Force, he spent three years overseas at Clark Air Base in the Philippines and then two years at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida. Bethel is proud of his time in the Air Force and was planning on making it his career, but the military got out of power production for its bases and he returned home.

Once he returned home, he worked several different jobs while he waited for a job to open as a lineman. He got his first job with Roanoke Electric Cooperative in North Carolina. He worked with Roanoke Electric Cooperative and then the city of Rocky Mount, North Carolina, for a total of 15 years. He has been with Southside Electric Cooperative (SEC) for five years. Bethel currently serves as the district operations supervisor for the Northern District in Powhatan. In that position, Bethel is responsible for 11 linemen at the Northern office. He schedules the duties and tasks of the linemen, working to balance the scheduling of new services and work on long-term projects to continue to update and improve existing infrastructure. Bethel's well-laid plans can change in a moment's notice if an outage of power occurs; safely fixing outages is the number-one priority for SEC. If an outage occurs, it is all-hands-on deck until power is returned to the affected members. He enjoys the close working relationship he has with his fellow linemen. He adds that the comradery is close to what he felt in the military.

While he was with Roanoke Electric Cooperative, Bethel recalls working after a tornado struck in the area. His crew was dispatched to a farmhouse that had lost power. When he and his crew arrived at the house, he found it partially destroyed and the homeowner trapped inside. He assisted in freeing the homeowner and calling the local rescue squad. He was happy to be able to assist the member in any way possible.

Originally from Florida, Bethel now lives in Amelia with his wife and two children; he also has three grown children from a previous marriage. His wife works for Southern States Cooperative. His hobbies are hunting and fishing. With two young children at home, he spends a great deal of time following their sports activities.

Bethel's favorite part of the job is taking care of the members, adding, "Members are our top priority."

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