



ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC

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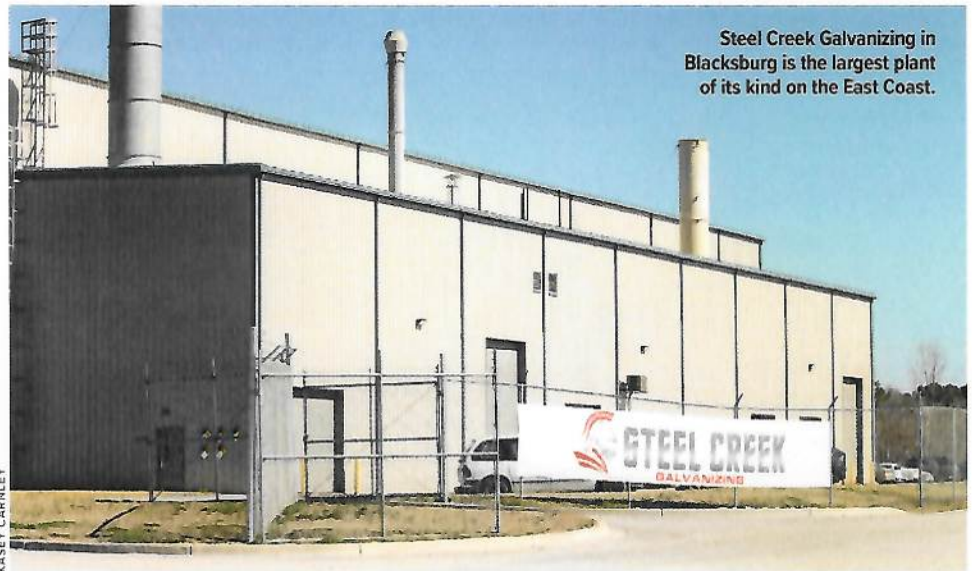
**PRESIDENT & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**  
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*Your cooperative is committed to the provision of safe, reliable, and reasonably priced electricity and other energy related services while improving the communities we serve.*

**CO-OP NEWS EDITOR**  
 Kasey Carnley



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Steel Creek Galvanizing in Blacksburg is the largest plant of its kind on the East Coast.

KASEY CARNLEY

## BREC powers innovation

### Steel Creek Galvanizing

MUCH OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE we see every day is made from steel. The problem is that steel corrodes. When a solution was needed long ago, hot dip galvanizing was born. This type of treatment to steel has been used to protect steel structures and components since before our grandparent’s time.

BREC business member, Steel Creek Galvanizing in Blacksburg, the largest plant of its kind on the East Coast, is bringing something new to the party.

“Our plant is the place where the science of galvanizing meets the demand and need for more environmental responsibility,” says Carroll Baynard, chief operating officer. “The process has always used chemicals and acid to treat various types of steel and the employees have to breathe those chemicals every day as they work. We’ve changed all that.”

Galvanizing involves preparing the surface of regular steel and dipping it in molten zinc, which metallurgically bonds to the steel. The plant uses a large “kettle” or tank that is 55 feet long, 9 feet wide and 11 feet deep. The process produces a coating that protects the steel and the structures it creates. You can tell if an object has been galvanized by the distinctive silver/gray color. Different steel chemistries create different appearances from shiny to matte finish.

Steel Creek Galvanizing has taken pollutants and emissions out of a regularly environmentally hazardous industry. Using a flue heat economizer, the plant has reduced CO2 emissions and conserved energy while boosting efficiencies. They recycle energy, using the waste heat from the galvanizing kettle to power the preheating oven and to heat one of the process tanks. The company also uses a bag house filter system, which reduces pollutants released in the air to less than five parts per million. Best of all, the entire process is contained—no nasty acid smell for workers or any homes or businesses nearby.

BREC provides two lines of service to Steel Creek Galvanizing, one for the administration section and one for the process plant. More than that, we’re helping power innovation to industries.