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Thank a Lineman on April 10

You've likely noticed Altamaha EMC's crews out and about, working on power lines and other electrical equipment in our community. It's no secret that a lineman's job is tough—but it's a job that's essential and must be done, often in challenging conditions. This month, as we celebrate Lineman Appreciation Day on April 10, I thought I'd share some interesting facts about electric linemen with you.

The work can be heavy, in more ways than one. Did you know the equipment and tools that a lineman carries while climbing a utility pole can weigh up to 50 pounds? That's the same as carrying six gallons of water. Speaking of utility poles, linemen are required to climb poles ranging anywhere from 30 to 120 feet tall. If you have a fear of heights, this likely isn't the career path for you.

Linemen must be committed to their career—because it's not just a job, it's a lifestyle. The long hours and ever-present danger can truly take a toll. In fact, being a lineman is listed in the top 10 most dangerous jobs in the U.S.

Linemen often work non-traditional hours, outdoors in difficult conditions. While the job does not require a college degree, it does require technical skills, years of training and hands-on learning. Did you know that to become a journeyman lineman can take more than 7,000 hours of training (or about four years)? That's because working with high-voltage equipment requires specialized skills, experience, and an ongoing mental toughness. Shortcuts are not an option, and there is no room for error in this line of work.

Despite the many challenges, Altamaha EMC's linemen are committed to powering our local

community. During severe weather events that bring major power outages, linemen are among the first ones called. They must be ready to leave the comfort of their home and families unexpectedly, and they don't return until the job is done, often days later. That's why the lineman's family is also dedicated to service. They understand the importance of the job to the community.

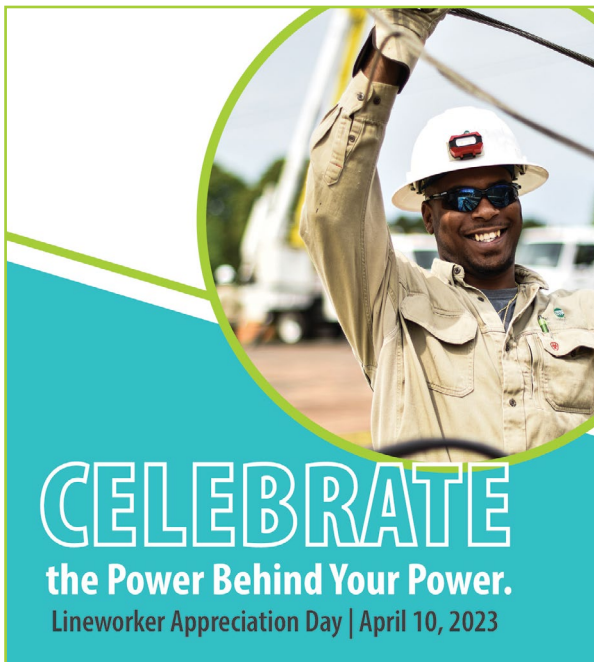
Nationwide, there are approximately 120,000 electric line workers. Altamaha EMC has 25 linemen that are responsible for keeping power flowing 24/7, 365 days a year. To do this, they maintain 3,501 miles of power lines across 7 counties. In addition to the highly visible tasks linemen perform, their job today goes far beyond climbing utility poles to repair a wire. Today's linemen are information experts who can pinpoint power outages from miles away. Line crews now use laptops, tablets, and other technologies to map outages, survey

damage and troubleshoot problems.

Being a lineman may not seem like a glamorous job, but it is essential to the life of our community. Without the exceptional dedication and commitment of these hardworking men and women, we simply would not have the reliable electricity that we need for everyday life.

So, the next time you see a lineman, please thank them for the work they do to keep power flowing, regardless of the time of day or weather conditions. After all, linemen are the power behind your power. Please join us as we recognize them on April 10, and follow **"#ThankALineworker"** on social media to see how others are recognizing line workers.

—Romanous Dotson, CEO



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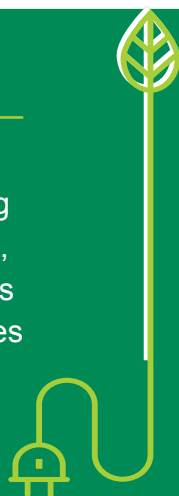
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“This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.”

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

This planting season, include energy efficiency in your landscaping plans. Adding shade trees around your home can reduce surrounding air temperatures as much as six degrees. To block heat from the sun, plant deciduous trees around the south side of your home. Deciduous trees provide excellent shade during the summer and lose their leaves in the fall and winter months, allowing sunlight to warm your home.

Source: energy.gov



Efficiency Upgrades to Help You Save This Summer

Spring and summer are opportune times for home upgrades and DIY projects. If you're planning to make improvements to your home, consider upgrades that promote better efficiency.

Here are a few projects that can help you save energy and money—and increase the comfort of your home.

Installing a smart thermostat is one of the simplest ways to manage home energy use and keep summer bills in check. Smart thermostats are easy to install and allow you to control your heating and cooling system from your phone. You can purchase an ENERGY STAR®-certified smart thermostat for as low as \$100, which can save you 8% on annual heating and cooling costs, about \$50 per year. This upgrade will quickly pay for itself, and you'll gain insight into better ways to heat and cool your home.

Speaking of smart, additional devices like smart LED bulbs also offer convenient control and help boost energy savings at home. With smart lighting, you can set a schedule for when and how your lights should be turned on or off. And the next time you head out to run errands and realize you left the lights on; all you have

to do is turn them off through your phone. Smart lights come in a variety of shapes, colors, and brightness levels—and you can purchase bulbs for indoor or outdoor use. Schedule outdoor smart lights to illuminate your home at night and when you're out of town for better security.

While it's not as trendy as incorporating smart technologies, sealing air leaks around your home is a simple, effective way to save energy and lower your bills. Applying new (or replacing old) weather stripping around doors and windows can instantly make your home more comfortable and reduce energy waste. Applying caulk to fill gaps can also improve the seal of your home. Caulk can be applied to a variety of areas, including windows, doors, bathtubs, and sinks.

If your home feels too warm during summer (and too chilly during winter) even after you've sealed with weather stripping and caulk, your home may need additional insulation. Insulation is considered a more expensive efficiency upgrade; however, if your home is under-insulated, additional insulation can make a big impact on reducing energy use and costs. The cost of new insulation

EFFICIENCY UPGRADES continued on back



Plant Trees Safely

Before you dig, call 811 to locate buried utility lines.

LOW TREE ZONE

Avoid planting within 20 ft. of power lines. If planting is unavoidable, only plant shrubs and small trees that reach a mature height of 15 ft. or less.

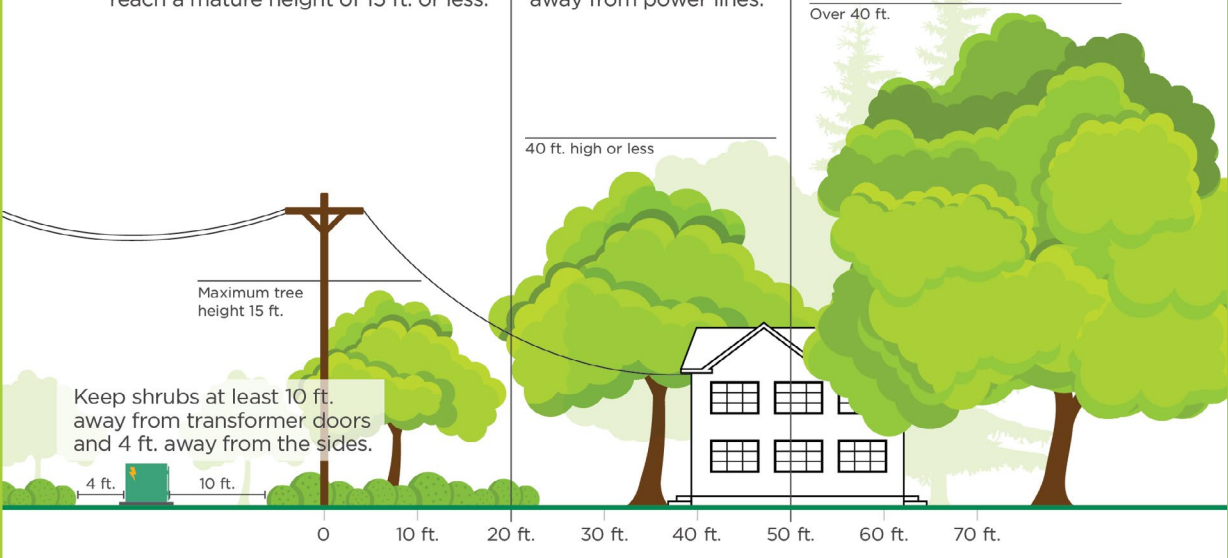
MEDIUM TREE ZONE

Plant medium trees (under 40 ft. when mature) at least 25 ft. away from power lines.

LARGE TREE ZONE

Plant large trees (over 40 ft. when mature) at least 50 ft. away from power lines.

Over 40 ft.



Find Electrical Hazards Before They Find You

You can't see all the electrical hazards in your home unless you look for them. Here are five invisible hazards that your family should avoid:

- **Overload.** Especially if your home is older, it might not have the capacity to handle all of today's energy-intensive gadgets. When your home was built, for example, it didn't have to handle phone chargers, electric treadmills or even automatic coffee pots. Invite an electrician to evaluate your home and upgrade its electrical capacity.
- **Old circuit breaker boxes.** A box that feels hot is probably faulty and needs replacing.
- **Constantly tripping breakers.** It's annoying when your hairdryer stops working or you trip a breaker whenever you plug in your curling iron and clothes iron at the same time. But those are warning signs that you're overloading your circuits. Call an electrician.
- **An outdated fire extinguisher.** This life-saving device doesn't come with an expiration date, but that doesn't mean it will work when you need it. Fire extinguishers last between five and fifteen years. Check the pressure gauge every month. Only if the needle is in the green area is it good to go.
- **Hot outlets.** Regularly touch all outlets. Warm or hot outlets could signal an electrical overload or wiring that is melting. While you're at it. Have an electrician switch out your old outlets for those with ground fault circuit interrupters, which will shut off in case of a hazard.

EFFICIENCY UPGRADES

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depends on a variety of factors like materials, size of the home and whether you use a contractor. Typically, the project costs can be recouped in a few years and your home will immediately feel more comfortable.

Of course, there are additional efficiency upgrades that can make a big impact on energy use, like replacing old appliances with ENERGY-STAR® models or replacing old, leaky windows with new, energy efficient windows. But these upgrades can be a bit pricey.

If you're wanting to make your home more energy efficient but you're not sure where to start, your best bet is to enlist the help of an expert to conduct an energy audit of your home. An energy audit can easily identify areas to boost efficiency, and then you can determine the projects you want to tackle first based on your budget and needs.

Dig Smart. Dig Safe.

Before you dig, call 811 or visit call811.com to mark underground utility lines. 811 is a free service that helps keep our community safe.



April is National Safe Digging Month.



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Member RECIPES

German Chocolate Pie

Ingredients

4 oz. German Sweet Chocolate
1/2 cup butter
1 can (12oz) evaporated milk
1/2 cup sugar
2 eggs, beaten
3 tablespoons cornstarch
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1-1/2 cups coconut
1/2 cup chopped pecans
2 unbaked pie shells

Directions

Heat oven to 375 degrees. In a saucepan, melt chocolate and butter over low heat. Once melted remove from heat. Gradually add evaporated milk, beating well. Add sugar, eggs, cornstarch, and vanilla, beating well. Sprinkle coconut and pecans into pie shell. Top with chocolate mixture and bake for 30 minutes.

-From the kitchen of Brandi Morris

Each month, our newsletter features recipes submitted by our members. If you have a favorite recipe and would like to share it with other readers in the Altamaha EMC service area, send a copy, complete with name, address and daytime phone number to: Tammye Vaughn, Altamaha EMC, P.O. Box 346, Lyons, GA 30436. Each month, a recipe will be selected for publication. The member who submitted the featured recipe will be given a \$10 credit on their next Altamaha EMC bill. Due to limited space, not all recipes received will be featured. Recipes printed in *Plugged In* are not independently tested; therefore, we must depend on the accuracy of those members who send recipes to us.