



Plugged in to Altamaha EMC

FEBRUARY 2016

The Official Newsletter of Altamaha Electric Membership Corporation

Serving: Toombs, Montgomery, Emanuel, Treutlen, Laurens, Johnson and Tattnall

Payment Kiosks Now Available!

As an added convenience for our members, Altamaha EMC now has payment kiosks at all three of our offices. The kiosks can be used to make payments on your electric account 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Cash, checks and credit/debit cards (Mastercard and Visa only) are accepted at the kiosks.

You must have your account number when making a payment at the kiosk. All monthly bills are now imprinted with a barcode at the bottom of the payment stub. This barcode can be scanned to access your account, or you can simply key in your account number using the touch screen.

Payment kiosks available at all Altamaha EMC offices.

If you plan to use the kiosk to make payments on a regular basis, you can request a printed card from us that you can scan to access your account each time you make a payment.

The kiosk accepts payments for regular electric accounts and pre-pay accounts.

Please call us at 912-526-8181 if you have any questions about using the payment kiosk.



Local Contest Builds Character and Confidence

The Area 4 EMC/FFA Agricultural Education Career Development Event (CDE), an annual competition in which agriculture students learn about the safe, efficient use of electricity while also sharpening their wiring skills, was held in November 2015. **Jackie Swaringim** from Toombs County High School and **Cejay Heath** from Treutlen High School represented Altamaha EMC in the competition.

Jackie Swaringim had an impressive performance and finished third in the region.

Cejay Heath was the Area 4 winner earning a \$500 scholarship for his first place finish. He advanced to the state contest which was held in January 2016 where he finished in third place and earned another \$500 scholarship. This was Cejay's third year competing in the CDE. During his three years of competing, he has earned \$2,100 in scholarship money

Offered through the local FFA chapters, with significant support from Altamaha EMC, the competition helps students develop the ability to think critically, communicate clearly and perform effectively in a variety of settings.

"We're pleased to play a part in offering the electrical wiring contest and a hands-on learning experience for students," says Van Henriott, Altamaha EMC Member Services Representative. "Educational programs aimed at students to promote the safe, efficient use of electricity are a natural fit for us."

During the CDE, students are tested in three key ways: 1) they complete a multiple choice exam, 2) they complete a hands-on, practical wiring exercise which tests their knowledge of the National Electric Code, and 3) they explain in detail the steps needed to complete a specific electrical task.

According to Henriott, during the course of the competition, students have the opportunity to demonstrate the skills they previously learned in class and labs and take pride in their accomplishments.

"The lessons learned from the competition are skills that students can apply in any number of situations," he notes.

Any active FFA member enrolled in a 9th through 12th grade high school agriculture education class is eligible to participate. As an added incentive to boost participation, students also vie for help with college scholarships for use at any college, university or vocational school in Georgia.

Over the years, Altamaha EMC representatives and students have grown to appreciate equally important benefits of participating in the wiring. In some cases, participation in the wiring contest has served as a catalyst for students considering academic and career goals. In fact, a number of former CDE participants decided to pursue degree programs in the electric industry or agriculture. Some have graduated with engineering degrees, completed electrical courses at technical colleges and eventually landed jobs in their area of study.



Cejay Heath (left) with Treutlen High School FFA Advisor Al Garner.



Jackie Swaringim (left) with Toombs County High School FFA Advisor Joey Montford.

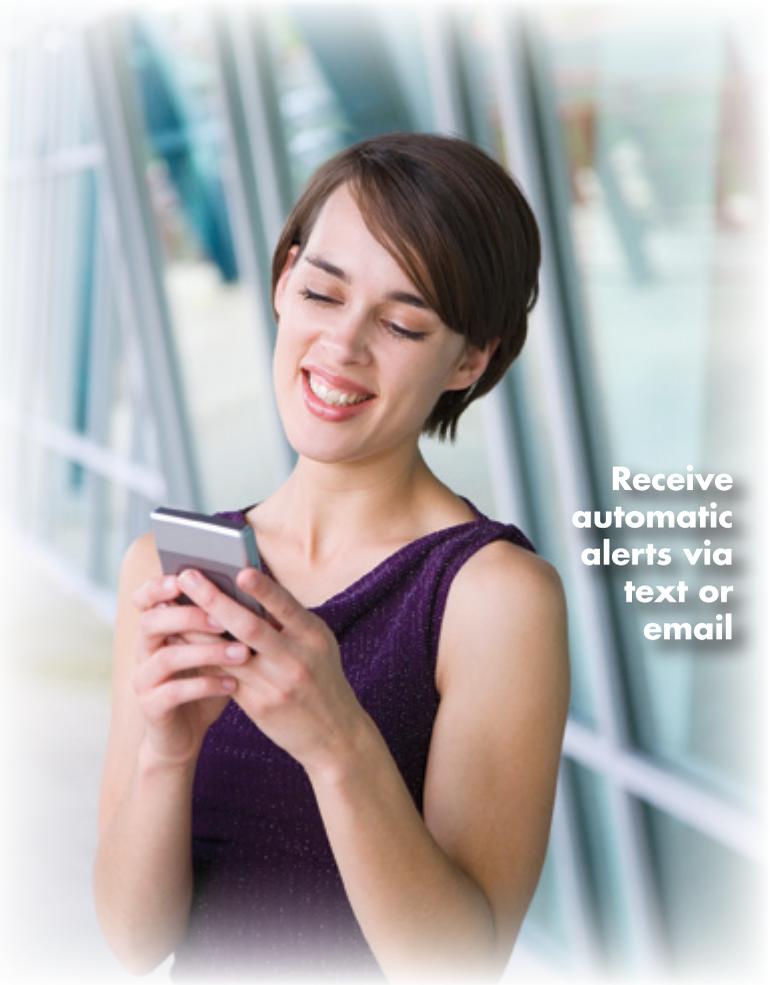
Take Charge with Pay•Your•Way

Altamaha EMC's innovative new prepay program for residential accounts allows you to take charge of your electric bills by paying for your electricity before you use it. This approach gives you more flexibility and control over the use of electricity. Some advantages of **Pay•Your•Way** are:

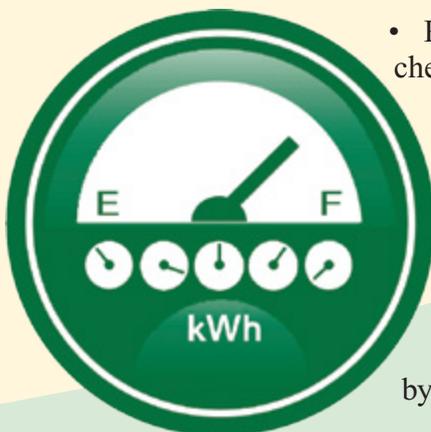
- No more surprises when you get your electric bill each month
- Notifications allow you to better monitor your energy use and budget for electricity costs
- Timely notices enable you to know immediately if your energy use increases significantly so you can take corrective action to resolve problems that will increase your bill
- You control the payment schedule – pay monthly, weekly or more often
- If you have an existing account with us, we will credit your deposit from that account to your **Pay•Your•Way** account
- Additional deposits, late fees or reconnect fees are not applicable to **Pay•Your•Way** accounts
- If your **Pay•Your•Way** account is disconnected, you will be reconnected automatically when a payment is made and applied to the account that raises the credit balance above \$50
- Payments can be made at all three Altamaha EMC offices during normal business hours, by telephone, or on our website at www.altamahaemc.com

- Payment methods include cash, check, money order, e-check, debit or credit card
- **Pay•Your•Way** includes a debt management feature that provides a way to spread a pre-existing delinquent balance due over an extended period of time
- Automatic alerts and notifications can be sent via text or email

For more information on **Pay•Your•Way**, contact us today by calling 912-526-8181.



Receive
automatic
alerts via
text or
email



Metallic Balloons and Power Lines Don't Mix

Runaway balloons—especially those with metallic content—too often come into contact with overhead power lines. When they do, they can cause a power outage. Mylar balloons ignite power surges when they touch power lines or float into substations.

Hundreds of thousands of homes and businesses lose their power every year when helium-filled foil balloons drift into power lines. It happens so much, in fact, that some states have enacted laws regulating the sale of foil or metalized Mylar balloons.



The balloon's metallic coating can conduct electricity. So when the balloon touches a wire, it can start a fire or create an electrical surge. Either way, power in the neighborhood will go out, home electronics are at risk and the electric cooperative's property is damaged.

If you must take balloons outdoors, secure them with weights so they won't get loose. And don't bring them near overhead power lines or deliberately set them free to float through the sky.

And, of course, if a balloon does get stuck in a power line, do not try to retrieve it. Instead, call your electric cooperative and report it.

You Can Prevent Burns

National Burn Awareness Week



There's just no reason for anyone in your family to suffer from an electrical burn. The first week of February is Burn Awareness Week and serves as a reminder for you to take an inventory of your home's burn hazards.

- Replace smoke detector batteries, which need changing at least once a year.
- Put away any extension cords left over from Christmas. They're not made for permanent use and can burn you or your children if they overheat because of overuse.
- If any electrical wires are hiding under rugs, move them. Stepping on them can cause damage and turn them into a burn hazard—or a fire risk.
- Teach your children to stay a safe distance from the stove.
- Turn pot handles inward when you cook, and place them on rear burners if you have children.
- Lower your water heater thermostat to 120 degrees, a comfortable temperature that won't scald.
- Replace traditional candles with realistic-looking, battery-operated versions.
- Forbid your children from lighting matches and playing with lighters.





Member RECIPES

NOTE: This recipe was originally published in our December 2015 newsletter. The toffee was inadvertently omitted from the ingredients list. Below is the corrected version of the recipe. We apologize for the error.



Toffee Snowball Cookies

Ingredients

1 cup room temperature butter
5 tablespoons sugar
2 teaspoons vanilla
1 tablespoon water
1/4 teaspoon salt
2 cups flour
2 cups finely chopped pecans
3 ounces toffee pieces
3 ounces mini chocolate chips
powdered sugar

Directions

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper, set aside. Cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add vanilla and water, mix well. Stir flour and salt into mixture. Blend in pecans, toffee bits and mini chocolate chips. Roll into balls and flatten. Bake for 15 to 18 minutes or until lightly golden. Remove from oven. While cookies are still warm, roll in powdered sugar. Once cooled, place cookies into airtight container with lid and top with powdered sugar again to coat well.

– From the kitchen of Anita Shepherd

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.