



# Plugged in to Altamaha EMC

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



## Energy-Saving Tips

### HVAC SYSTEMS (HEAT PUMP)

- Heat pumps account for approximately 52 percent of a home's energy use
- Have your system serviced by a licensed contractor at least once annually, typically in the spring or fall
- Change filter out according to size of filter (one-inch, monthly; five-inch, twice a year)
- Keep supply vents and return vents clear of obstruction for more efficient air flow
- Have ductwork checked periodically for leaks and proper air flow

### THERMOSTAT

- Keep thermostats set at 68 degrees in winter and 78 degrees in the summer
- Energy use increases an average of 3 percent to 5 percent for each degree change
- Consider utilizing a Wi-Fi thermostat to regulate temperature changes (no more than 2 degrees at a time) to prevent heat strips from coming on causing a greater consumption of power

### WEATHER STRIPPING/CAULKING THRESHOLD

- Check exterior door seals and thresholds periodically for air infiltration and change when needed
- Check windows for air infiltration and caulk and seal where needed
- Seal around all exterior plumbing fixtures to minimize air infiltration

### WATER HEATER

- Water heaters account for approximately 18 percent of a home's energy use
  - Ensure thermostat temperature is set at 120 degrees on both top and bottom thermostats
  - Drain and refill annually to rid tank of sediments
  - Have your water heater serviced annually by a licensed plumber

### LIGHTS

- Lighting accounts for about 9 percent of a home's energy use
- Utilize LED lighting to have better quality lighting while reducing power consumption
- Conversions:
  - 6-7 watt LED bulb is equivalent to a 40-watt incandescent bulb
  - 7-10 watt LED bulb is equivalent to a 60-watt incandescent bulb
  - 12-13 watt LED bulb is equivalent to a 70-watt incandescent bulb
  - 14-20 watt LED bulb is equivalent to a 100-watt incandescent bulb

Check exterior  
door seals, thresholds  
and windows for air  
infiltration



# Changing Lives One Penny at the Time

**A**ltamaha EMC's Operation Round Up program is the definition of neighbors helping neighbors. Operation Round Up would not be possible without the support of our generous members who donate each month.

The last half of 2019 was a busy time for the Altamaha EMC Foundation, the group who administers the Operation Round Up funds. Grants were awarded to seven local agencies.

**His Works Ministry Outreach and Food Bank** provides food, clothing, household items and supplies to individuals and families in need in the local area. They received a \$5,000 grant to help with their mission.

**Friends of the Vidalia/Toombs County Libraries** received a \$5,000 grant to purchase new tables and computer chairs for the Vidalia Library and the Nelle Brown Library in Lyons. Over 19,000 people used the computer stations in these libraries during the past year.



**The Burn Foundation of America** was awarded a \$5,000 grant to provide medical supplies and assistance to burn victims and their families. The Burn Foundation supports families of patients treated at the Joseph M. Still Burn Center in Augusta. In 2018, they assisted 2,177 families. 93 of those families live in Altamaha EMC's service area.

**Toombs County Extension/4-H** was awarded a \$3,000 grant to help fund youth leadership projects.

**Toombs County School System** received \$2,500 in grant funds to support their after-school care program. This program serves over 150 students in the Toombs County school system.

**Tattall County Extension/4-H** received a \$1,000 grant to implement a Seatbelt Ambassador program in the Tattall County schools to raise awareness of distracted driving and the importance of always buckling up.



**A&O Men's Aftercare Center** in Swainsboro provides housing, counseling and support for men transitioning from lives of addiction to recovery and re-entry to the workforce. They were approved for a \$2,500 grant to help with maintenance, supplies/food for clients and transportation.

**With the continued support of our members, we look forward to making a difference in 2020. Applications for the next round of funding are due by March 6, 2020. For more information, contact Tammye Vaughn at 912-526-2120.**





# Broadband Progress Update

Altamaha EMC's grant application was not approved during the first round of USDA's ReConnect Program. None of the EMCs in Georgia were recipients of funds during this first round. This is very disappointing considering the need we have in rural Georgia.

We were rejected because maps used by USDA show certain locations in our proposed service area as already having adequate broadband service. We know it's not the case, but until USDA revises their maps to better show actual coverage we have to play by their rules. These maps are being revised but currently they favor the existing traditional broadband providers.

The good news is that there is a second round of funding and we are working diligently to submit our applications before the March deadline. We remain committed to bring broadband service to our members. Our application will propose starting the broadband service in areas that unquestionably qualify for the grant money and use that as the backbone for expansion to eventually reach every cooperative member. We need the grant as seed money to ensure a successful startup. Legislation prohibits EMCs from using any money from the electric side of the business to subsidize the broadband services.

We will need the help of our members as we prepare this new application. If asked, please respond to help us better meet your critical needs for the future.

## Changes to Irrigation Rate Schedule

Altamaha EMC is restructuring our irrigation rate schedule. A letter explaining the new rate schedule will be mailed by the end of March to all members who have accounts on the irrigation rate schedule. Please contact us if you have any questions after receiving the letter.



## Foundation Scholarship Applications Available

Four scholarships, worth \$500 each, will be awarded to local students this spring. The Altamaha EMC Foundation Scholarships were founded in an effort to help local students further their education. The scholarships are funded entirely by members' donations through Operation Round Up. Applicants must be a high school senior and live in the household of an Altamaha EMC member.

Applications are available on our website, [www.altamahaemc.com](http://www.altamahaemc.com). You can also request an application from any of our four office locations.

Scholarships will be awarded based on academic ability and financial need. Winners will be announced in May 2020.



# Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Are you using your fireplace efficiently? Remember to turn down the thermostat when burning a fire, and close the damper when a fire is not burning.

*Source: energy.gov*



## TIPS TO AVOID SCAMS

Scammers can threaten you with everything from shutting off power to your home to legal action. Don't fall victim to these types of scams.

Here are a few reminders from your electric co-op.

- Altamaha EMC employees will never show up at your door to demand payment.
- Never give personal information to an unknown caller or visitor. Altamaha EMC representatives have access to the details they need to service your account.
- Demands for immediate payment by wire transfer, cryptocurrency, gift cards or cash reload cards should immediately raise red flags.
- If you think you've been contacted by a scammer falsely representing the co-op, please let us know as soon as possible.



**ALTAMAHA**

Electric Membership Corporation

Community Owned · Community Built · Community Builder





# Member RECIPES

## Chicken Veggie Rice

### Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breast, cut into small pieces
- 1 teaspoon garlic-herb seasoning (salt-free)
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 1 small onion, thinly sliced
- 1 (10.5-ounce) can reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1/4 cup water
- 1-1/2 cups instant brown rice, uncooked
- 1-1/2 cups grape tomatoes, halved
- 4 cups baby spinach leaves, washed, patted dry

### Directions:

Heat oil in large skillet over medium heat. Sprinkle chicken pieces with seasonings. Add chicken pieces; cover and cook about 10 minutes, stirring frequently until chicken is done. Add onion and stir-fry for about 1 minutes. Stir in broth, water, rice, tomatoes and spinach. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and cover. Simmer about 10 minutes. Turn burner off and let stand for 5 more minutes or until rice absorbs most of the liquid. *Serves 4.*

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.