



# Plugged in to Altamaha EMC

MARCH 2019

*The Official Newsletter of Altamaha Electric Membership Corporation*

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

## The Commitment of an Electric Lineman

National studies consistently rank power line installers and repairers among the most dangerous jobs in the country, and for good reason. Laboring high in the air wearing heavy equipment and working directly with high voltage creates the perfect storm of a dangerous and unforgiving profession. But electric linemen are up to the task. These brave men and women are committed to safety, as well as the challenges of the job.

Altamaha EMC's linemen are responsible for keeping power flowing day and night, regardless of national holidays, vacations, birthdays, weddings or other important family milestones.

Beyond the years of specialized training and apprenticeships, it takes internal fortitude and a mission-oriented outlook to be a good lineman. In fact, this service-oriented mentality is a hallmark characteristic of linemen. The job requires linemen to set aside their personal priorities to better serve their local community.

### **Family Support System**

To perform their jobs successfully, linemen depend on their years of training, experience and each other to get the job done safely. Equally important is their reliance on a strong support system at home. A lineman's family understands and supports their loved one's commitment to the greater community during severe storms and power outages.

This means in times of prolonged power outages, the family and their lineman may have minimal communication and not see each other for several days. Without strong family support and understanding, this challenging job would be all the more difficult.

Following Hurricane Michael in 2018, the wife of one Altamaha EMC lineman said, "My kids and I were at home without power for 2 days while my husband worked to restore power for the members of Altamaha EMC. He was working 18+ hour days and coming home to rest for a few hours before returning to work. He bathed in the swimming pool until our

power was restored. Life without electricity isn't easy, but the satisfaction my husband receives from helping others is worth the sacrifices our family makes."



### **Community Commitment**

In Altamaha EMC's seven county service territory, and across the country, electric co-op linemen's mission-focused mentality of helping others often extends beyond their commitment to their work at the co-op. Linemen are often familiar figures in the community. Several of Altamaha EMC's linemen serve our local communities as volunteer firefighters, first responders, recreation department coaches, and other various leadership roles.

### **Thank You**

Monday, April 8 is Lineman Appreciation Day. Given the dedication of our linemen, both on and off the job, I encourage you to take a moment and acknowledge the many contributions they make to our local community. And if you see their family members in the grocery store or out and about in the town, please offer them a thank you as well.

**—Romanous Dotson, CEO**





# 3 Easy DIY Spring Projects to Save Energy

Winter weather can have a big impact on your energy bills, hitting your pockets a little harder than you would have liked. Now that spring is just around the corner, it's the perfect time to tackle a few DIY efficiency projects for your home. The good news: You don't have to be an energy expert to do this!

There are several easy ways to save energy, but if you're willing to take a hands-on approach, here are three projects you can do now to start saving.

## **Make the Most of Your Water Heater**

Let's start with one of the easiest projects: insulating your water heater. Insulating a water heater that's warm to the touch can save 7 to 16 percent annually on your water heating bills. It should also be noted that if your water heater is new, it is likely already insulated. But if your water heater is warm to the touch, it needs additional insulation.

You can purchase a pre-cut jacket or blanket for about \$20. You'll also need two people for this project. Before you start, turn off the water heater. Wrap the blanket around the water heater and tape it to temporarily keep it in place. If necessary, use a marker to note the areas where the controls are so you can cut them out. Once the blanket is positioned correctly tape it permanently in place, then turn the water heater back on. If you have an electric water heater, do not set the thermostat above 130 degrees, which can cause overheating.

## **Seal Air Leaks with Caulk**

The average American family spends \$2,000 annually on energy bills, but unfortunately, much of that money is wasted through air leaks in the home. Applying caulk around windows, doors, electrical wiring and plumbing can save energy and money. There are many different types of caulking

compounds available, but the most popular choice is silicone. Silicone caulk is waterproof, flexible and won't shrink or crack.

Before applying new caulk, clean and remove any old caulk or paint with a putty knife, screwdriver, brush or solvent. The area should be dry before you apply the new caulk.

Apply the caulk in one continuous stream, and make sure it sticks to both sides of the crack or seam. Afterwards, use a putty knife to smooth out the caulk, then wipe the surface with a dry cloth.

## **Weather Strip Exterior Doors**

One of the best ways to seal air leaks is to weather strip exterior doors, which can keep out drafts and help you control energy costs. Weather stripping materials vary, but you can ask your local hardware or home store for assistance if you're unsure about the supplies you need.

When choosing weather stripping materials, make sure it can withstand temperature changes, friction and the general "wear and tear" for the location of the door. Keep in mind, you will need separate materials for the door sweep (at the bottom of the door) and the top and sides.

Before applying the new weather stripping, clean the moulding with water and soap, then let the area dry completely. Measure each side of the door, then cut the weather stripping to fit each section. Make sure the weather stripping fits snugly against both surfaces so it compresses when the door is closed.

By completing these simple efficiency projects, you can save energy (and money!) while increasing the comfort level of your home. And you can impress your family and friends with your savvy energy-saving skills.



# Foundation Scholarship Applications Available

**F**our scholarships, worth \$1,000 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 member of Altamaha EMC.

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

Scholarships will be awarded based on academic ability and financial need. Winners will be announced in May 2019.



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# Clean your dryer lint trap—and more

It's automatic for most people to swipe the lint from the clothes dryer's lint trap after every load of clothes. But that's not enough from keeping your dryer from becoming a fire hazard. Here's what else you can do:

- If your clothes are still damp when the dryer shuts off, the machine's exhaust duct may be clogged or blocked. Don't use the dryer again until you clear it.
- Clean the dryer vent and exhaust duct at least once a year. The duct is the coil that sends the hot dryer air to the outdoors. The vent is the hole where the hot air leaves the house. Both can get clogged with lint and overheat, send dirty, moist air back into your home, or even catch on fire. You might have to disconnect the exhaust duct from the dryer and from the vent to remove a blockage.
- Sweep behind your dryer regularly. Lint can accumulate there and also underneath.
- If your exhaust duct is plastic or foil, replace it with a rigid or corrugated, semi-rigid metal duct. Plastic and foil are too flexible and trap lint easily. They're also easier to crush, which will prevent air from flowing through to the vent.
- Avoid throwing gasoline-, oil- or chemical-soiled clothes and towels into the dryer. Instead, wash them several times and line-dry them. If you have to use the dryer for them, choose the lowest setting and remove them the minute the cycle is finished. Even washed-and-dried clothes that have come in contact with volatile chemicals can ignite.





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# Member RECIPES



## Italian Pasta Salad

### Ingredients:

- 1 (16 ounce) package fusilli or rotini pasta
- 3 cups cherry tomatoes, halved
- ½ pound provolone cheese, cubed
- ½ pound sliced pepperoni, cut in half
- 1 large green bell pepper, diced
- 1 (10 ounce) can black olives, drained
- ¼ teaspoon white sugar
- 1 (8 ounce) bottle Italian salad dressing

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add pasta and cook for 8 to 10 minutes or until al dente. Drain, and rinse with cold water. Pat the noodles dry with a clean dish towel or paper towels. In a large bowl, combine pasta with tomatoes, cheese, pepperoni, green pepper, olives and sugar. Pour in salad dressing and toss to coat. Refrigerate at least a couple of hours for flavors to come together before serving. If letting sit overnight, you may need some more Italian dressing added before serving because the pasta will soak it up. Enjoy!

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.