



Plugged in to Altamaha EMC

MARCH 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.



Thank a Lineman on April 11

Electric linemen work with thousands of volts of electricity high atop power lines 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. They are responsible for restoring power during an outage, maintaining the lines and building new service to our members.

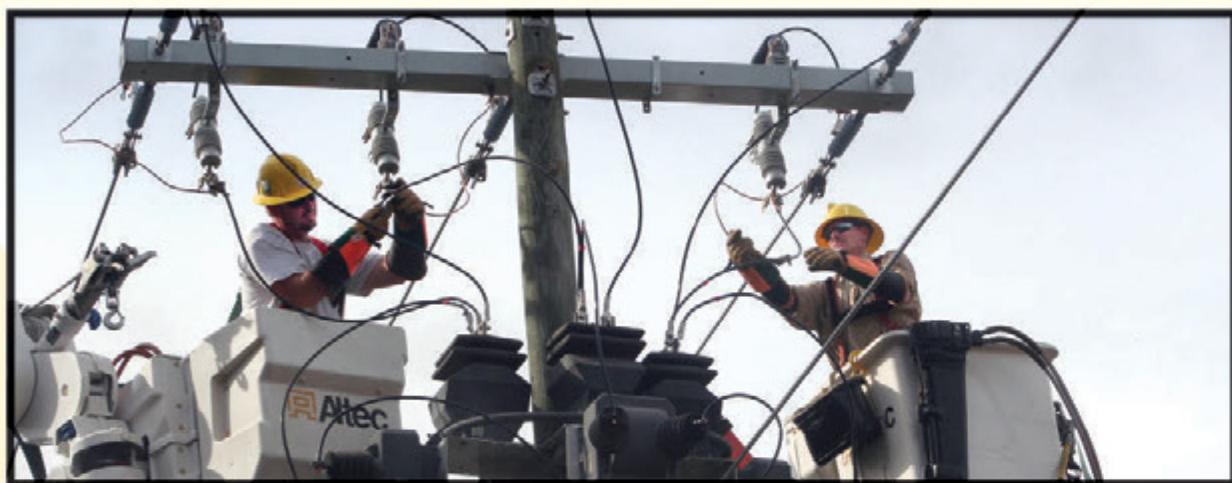
April 11, 2016, is National Lineman Appreciation Day. Join us in recognizing the people who often work in brutal weather conditions to ensure we all have safe and reliable power. We proudly salute all electric linemen for the services they perform to keep power flowing and protect the public's safety.

Altamaha EMC linemen maintain almost 3,500

miles of line in our seven-county service territory.

"Our linemen are the first responders of our electric distribution system, and they work around the clock on high-voltage lines," said Romanous Dotson, Altamaha EMC General Manager/CEO. "Conditions can be dangerous, but they power through to ensure reliable service for our members. In fact, linemen are often first responders during storms and other catastrophic events, working to make the scene safe for other public safety officers."

Join us in thanking the linemen for all they do to keep our lights on!



Outdoor work has its own set of safety rules

Play it safe around electricity when you're outdoors this spring. Here are some tips:

- Keep power cords, tools and equipment away from water and wet areas while you're using them and when you're storing them.
- Before you climb a ladder or extend the handle of a tool, look up so you can clear overhead power lines.
- Call 811 before you dig in your yard.

- When you plant a tree or install a satellite dish, locate it at least 15 feet from overhead power lines.
- Educate your children about the dangers of power lines. Insist that they fly kites and climb trees far from electrical lines and equipment. Everyone in your family should know better than to try to untangle a kite or a model airplane that gets caught in a power line.
- Inspect power tools for frayed cords, broken plugs and weathered or damaged housings before the first use this spring. Don't use damaged equipment, and unplug tools before storing them.
- Scope out the area before you trim tree limbs and shrubs, as power lines can be hidden by

- foliage. Trimming branches that are growing into or around overhead power lines on your property is not a job for a homeowner. Contact your electric cooperative to do that dangerous work.
- Rid the area around your outdoor air conditioning unit of plants and clutter so the air can circulate around it freely.
- If you use extension cords when you work with outdoor tools, replace them all with models designed for outdoor use. Also, check that extension cords are rated for use with your equipment.
- Beware of all electric lines. Even low-voltage electric lines and cords can be hazardous if damaged or improperly handled.



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**



Enjoy springtime—with energy savings

After a mostly mild winter, the weather is beginning to improve. Put the mild temperatures to work for your energy bill. Here are 10 easy ways to save energy this spring:

-  **Hire a heating and air conditioning pro** to check out your air conditioning system and window A/C units. Annual spring maintenance can keep your A/C running smoothly and catch any problems in the making. Ask the pro to change or clean the filters while he's there.
-  **Open the windows.** As soon as it's warm enough to feel comfortable indoors without heat, turn the heat off and invite the warm, outdoor air inside. The natural breezes will freshen a stuffy house that's been closed up all winter. And keeping the heat and A/C turned off for a few weeks—or longer—will save you a bundle on energy.
-  **Let the sunshine in.** Throw open the drapes or blinds during the day to let bright, warm sunrays into your rooms on mild days. Then, turn off the lights and the heat. When summer arrives, close those drapes during the day to keep the sun from overheating your house.
-  **If you have a programmable thermostat, use it to its potential.** Set it to automatically lower the heat before everyone leaves the house in the morning and again when the family turns in for the night. Once air-conditioning season starts, program it to conserve the A/C in the same way.
-  **Switch the direction of ceiling fan blades.** During the spring and summer, the blades should pull warm air up toward the ceiling, rather than push it down into the room. Using ceiling fans will allow you to lower your thermostat setting by up to 4 degrees.
-  **Have a cookout.** Prepare dinner on your outdoor grill on nice evenings rather than using the stove or oven. Appliances that create heat tend to heat up the whole house.
-  **Run the dishwasher and clothes dryer after dark.** No need to add that heat to your home's air during the day when it's warm outdoors.
-  **Caulk and weather strip windows and doors.** You read about this every spring because you should do it again every spring. Caulking doesn't last forever.
-  **Dress for the weather.** Shed the sweaters and socks when it's warm outside so you can delay the start of air-conditioning season inside.
-  **Turn down the water heater.** If you snuck it up a couple of degrees during the winter to make your showers extra-steamy, lower it to 120 degrees. Not only is that hot enough, it's a safer temperature than anything higher, especially if children or older family members are showering in your home.

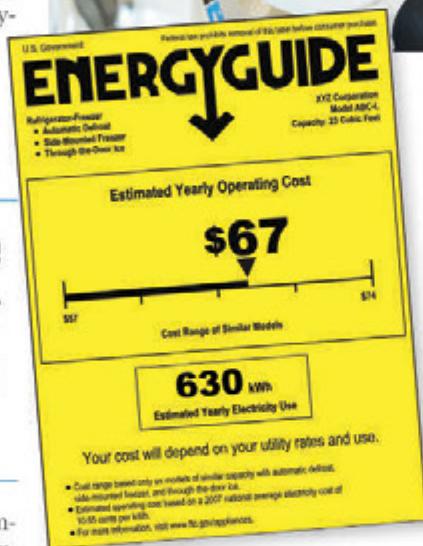
How to choose energy-efficient appliances

It's never a good day when you realize you need to replace a large appliance in your home. However, when that unfortunate time comes, take time to consider what you will purchase—especially for appliances that haven't been replaced in a number of years, as the technology may have changed substantially. Instead of rushing out to buy the same make and model of appliance you had, assess the market and make a smart purchase that will save you money in the long run.

Every appliance you buy has an operating cost, which is the cost of the energy needed to power the appliance. According to the Department of Energy, appliances account for about 13 percent of the average household's energy use. Clothes dryers, refrigerators/freezers, computers, microwaves, dishwashers and washing machines are the appliances that tend to use the most energy in a typical American home.

Purchasing an appliance that is too large for your needs will lead to more energy being used.

To facilitate more-informed comparison shopping, the federal government requires some appliances to have an EnergyGuide label stating the approximate energy consumption and operating costs. Appliances with an ENERGY STAR label use 10 percent to 50 percent less energy than standard appliances and are generally more expensive than their standard counterparts. So it's important



A sample EnergyGuide label

to compare the lifetime costs of each (upfront cost plus operating cost) to ensure that purchasing the efficient appliance is the best choice.

In addition to looking at the efficiency of your new appliance, make

sure to consider its size. Purchasing an appliance that is too large for your needs will lead to more energy being used. For example, laptops or small desktops use only one-quarter of the energy of typical desktop computers and have sufficient memory and processing speeds for many common applications. This same principle applies to refrigerators, air conditioners and many other appliances.

As you begin your search for a new appliance, check with your electric cooperative to see if it offers incentives for energy-efficient models. The ENERGY STAR website, energy.gov, is an additional resource.

Dramatic advancements in the efficiency of many electric appliances now can provide the same level of comfort with substantially less electric input. With a little research and forethought, you can save money over the life of your appliance without sacrificing any benefits. Good luck, and happy shopping!



The second Sunday in March will trigger Daylight Saving Time, when we "spring ahead" and set our clocks one hour later. That's also the best day to change the batteries in smoke alarms and carbon monoxide

detectors—even if the batteries aren't dead.

If you don't have fire alarms and carbon monoxide detectors, your family is at risk. The alarms will loudly warn you if smoke or gas is present in your home, so you can get out. Carbon monoxide is a clear, odorless gas that is deadly but hard to detect. If you don't have

an alarm, it's unlikely you will know if your home has a leak.

Carbon monoxide doesn't come just from cars. Your gas furnace or stove is a potential source of the gas. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) offers these tips for poison prevention:

- Keep gas appliances properly adjusted.
- Use electric space heaters, not gas space heaters.
- Install an exhaust fan, vented to the outdoors, over a gas stove.
- Open flues when wood-burning fireplaces are in use.
- Choose properly sized wood stoves with tight-fitting doors that are certified to meet EPA emission standards.
- Have a trained professional inspect, clean and tune up your central heating system—including furnaces, flues and chimneys—annually. Repair leaks promptly.
- Do not idle your car inside the garage.



Member RECIPES



Vidalia Onion-Silver Queen Corn Pie

Ingredients

- 1 cup chopped Vidalia onion, divided
- 1 cup Silver Queen corn or other variety, divided
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 2 teaspoons chopped garlic
- 1 cup half-and-half
- 4 eggs, beaten
- 1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese



Directions

Sauté 3/4 cup Vidalia onions and 3/4 cup corn in butter until golden; set aside. Combine garlic, half-and-half, eggs, crushed red pepper, salt and pepper. Stir until well combined. Place cheese in bottom of a greased, deep-dish pie plate. Add sautéed onion/corn mixture and reserved corn and onions. Pour egg mixture over all; do not stir. Bake at 375 degrees for 30-45 minutes or until knife inserted in center comes out clean. Serves 6.

– Courtesy of Georgia Grown

Visit Georgia Grown's website, www.georgiagrown.com, for more great recipes from farms and producers across our state.

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.