

Electric News

Published for Members of the Little Ocmulgee EMC

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Tree Trimming Improves Service for All

One of the things we love best about our community is the natural beauty that surrounds us. We are fortunate to have so many trees that offer beauty, shade and a habitat for all sorts of birds and other wildlife. We know that you appreciate our community for many of the same reasons.

At Little Ocmulgee EMC (LOEMC), we strive to balance maintaining beautiful surroundings and ensuring safe, reliable, affordable power supply by keeping power lines clear in rights-of-way (ROW). While we recognize and appreciate the beauty of trees, there are three main benefits to tree trimming in ROW areas. However, before touching on the main reasons, you should know what a right-of-way is and how it may affect you.

ROWs are the land we use to construct, maintain, replace or repair underground and overhead power lines. The 25-foot ROW on either side of the line enables the co-op to provide clearance from trees and other obstructions that could hinder the power line installation, maintenance or operation. ROW areas are typically on public land or located near a business or home. LOEMC must be able to maintain the power lines above and below the ROW.

The goal of our vegetation management program is to provide safe, reliable, affordable power to our members, while also maintaining the beauty of our community. Proactive vegetation management benefits co-op members in three tangible ways:

Safety

We care about our members and put their safety and that of our lineworkers above all else. Overgrown vegetation and trees pose a risk to power lines. For example, if trees touch power lines in our members' yards, they can pose grave danger to families. If children

can access those trees, they could climb into a danger zone. Electricity can arc, or jump, from a power line to a nearby conductor like a tree.

A proactive approach also diminishes the chances of branches or trees falling during severe weather, which makes it more complicated and dangerous for lineworkers to restore power.

Reliability

One of the biggest benefits of a smart vegetation management program is reliability. Strategic tree trimming reduces the frequency of downed lines causing power outages. Generally speaking, healthy trees don't fall on power lines, and clear lines don't cause problems. Proactive trimming and pruning keep lines clear to promote reliability.

Affordability

Little Ocmulgee EMC is a not-for-profit cooperative, which means we strive to keep our costs in check to keep our rates affordable. This extends to our approach to right-of-way

management. If trees grow too close to power lines, the potential for expensive repairs also increases. Effective tree trimming and other vegetation management efforts keep costs down for everyone.

Our community is a special place. We appreciate the beauty trees afford, but we also know our community depends on us to provide reliable energy. In and around your neighborhood you might notice crews spraying, mulching, side-trimming and removing trees. These are crews that LOEMC contracts to clear ROW areas. Cleanup crews will follow two to three days after their initial cutting to clear the debris left behind.

Through right-of-way maintenance, we are better able to keep power lines clear, prepare for future weather events and secure the reliability of the grid.



Little Ocmulgee EMC to Celebrate 86 Years of Service to Members

The 86th Little Ocmulgee EMC Annual Meeting of Members will be held Nov. 13, 2024, in the Wheeler County High School gymnasium in Alamo. Doors will open promptly at 12:30 p.m. for member registration.

Prior to the business session, which begins at 2 p.m., there will be a health fair, vendor booths and gospel entertainment. Door prizes will be awarded at the conclusion of the meeting.

**Little Ocmulgee EMC
Annual Meeting of Members
Wednesday, Nov. 13, 2024**

**Wheeler County High School Gymnasium
50 Snowhill Road
Alamo, GA 30411**



Pursuant to Little Ocmulgee EMC Bylaws, a committee to nominate members for directorship has been appointed. The following members will serve:

- **Laurens County (District 1):** Betty Barrow, Eric Phillips, Caleb Skipper
- **Telfair/Dodge counties (District 2):** Marty Kinnett, Carey Knowles, Mattie White
- **Wheeler/Montgomery counties (District 3):** Carey Clark, Tommy Clark, Jamie Nobles

If you have comments or suggestions concerning nominations or persons who wish to be considered for director nomination, please contact the above-named committee members.

The Nominating Committee will meet Aug. 27, 2024, to make director nominations. One director from each district is elected each year and will serve staggered three-year terms.

Directors seeking reelection for another three-year term are:

- **Laurens County (District 1):** Ronnie Bates
- **Telfair/Dodge counties (District 2):** George Best
- **Wheeler/Montgomery counties (District 3):** Benny Evans

Nominations for directors can also be made by petition, which must be signed by 15 or more Little Ocmulgee EMC members and submitted to the co-op no later than Sept. 13, 2024, at 5 p.m. Nominations are not allowed from the floor at the Annual Meeting.

Energy Efficiency *Tip of the Month*



Placing heat sources, such as lamps, computers or TVs, near your thermostat can result in false temperature readings, increased energy use and inconsistent cooling/heating. Make sure your thermostat is installed in an area clear of obstructions, electronic devices, direct sunlight and drafts.

Ensuring your thermostat is free from these types of interferences optimizes energy efficiency, improves indoor comfort and reduces wear and tear on your cooling/heating system.

Source: energy.gov



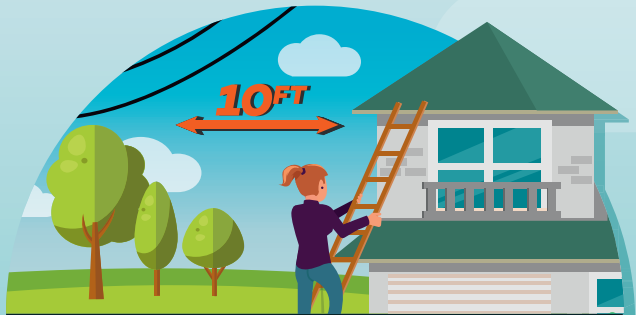
Home Electrical Safety

Always Look Up Always

Before starting **any** project, **be alert of where the power lines are located**, and know how high they are hanging. Whether you're working on the roof, trimming trees, or painting your siding, it's your job to be aware and to **alert others about nearby power lines**.



1. Locate **all** overhead power lines.



2. Stay at least **10 feet** away from all overhead power lines.



3. **Do not touch** anything in contact with power line.



4. Carry ladders and equipment **horizontally**.



5. Stay at least **35 feet** away from downed power lines and call 911.



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What Is Mutual Aid and Why Does It Matter?

By Jennah Denney

JOHN HUNEYCUTT, UNION POWER COOPERATIVE



By sharing resources, co-ops can significantly enhance their response capabilities.

Electric cooperatives employ a variety of methods to reduce the likelihood of power outages, from regular tree trimming and equipment maintenance and repairs to local grid updates. But outages do occur, and when they do, co-ops are ready to respond.

Another way co-ops prepare for major outages and disasters is through mutual aid, which is a collaborative approach to emergency planning. The mutual aid model allows electric co-ops to help each other out during times of need. This approach permits co-ops to “borrow” restoration workers from other co-ops, thereby increasing the workforce response to areas impacted by a major outage event. It’s essentially about neighbors helping neighbors, even when those neighbors are fellow co-ops located hundreds of miles away.

Electric co-ops operate according to seven Cooperative Principles, and Principles 6 and 7, Cooperation Among Cooperatives and Concern for Community, are directly connected to the mutual aid model.

The concept of mutual aid

originated with the rural electrification efforts in the 1930s. From the very beginning, electric co-ops relied on each other to assist in times of need, and mutual aid provides an essential safety net in times of crisis.

Mutual aid ultimately benefits co-ops’ members. During major outage events, co-ops can increase their workforce and respond more quickly, leading to shorter outage times for members.

Disaster response and mutual aid is managed by electric co-ops, as well as co-ops’ statewide organizations like Georgia EMC, which can also assist with coordination between states, helping ensure the necessary personnel and equipment that are the key ingredients of the mutual aid recipe. These efforts require effective logistics management and experts who fully understand resource allocation and have the know-how to respond under pressure.

During major outage events, a variety of equipment is necessary to complete repairs, including bucket trucks and other specialized vehicles, utility poles, transformers

and wires. Skilled lineworkers, tree trimmers, damage assessors and other key personnel are also often shared among co-ops. These experts provide critical skills and manpower to speed up the restoration process.

Because the national network of transmission and distribution infrastructure owned by electric co-ops has been built to federal standards, line crews from any electric co-op in the U.S. can arrive on the scene ready to provide emergency support and secure in their knowledge of the system’s engineering.

Today, mutual aid continues to be a vital part of how electric co-ops operate and serve members. The goal is to restore power as quickly and safely as possible after a major outage event, and by sharing resources, co-ops can significantly enhance their response capabilities.

Jennah Denney writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives.



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