



The LAMPLIGHTER

Official Member Newsletter of Washington EMC

January 2024

Serving members in Baldwin, Emanuel, Glascock, Hancock, Jefferson, Johnson, Laurens, Warren, Washington and Wilkinson counties

Beginner's guide to the electric grid

Electricity plays an essential role in everyday life. It powers our homes, offices, hospitals and schools. We depend on it to keep us warm in the winter and cool in the summer, charge our phones and binge our favorite TV shows. If the power goes out, even briefly, our lives can be disrupted.

The system that delivers your electricity is often described as the most complex machine in the world, and it's known as the electric grid.

What makes it so complex? We all use different amounts of electricity throughout the day, so the supply and demand for electricity is constantly changing. For example, we typically use more electricity in the mornings when we're starting our day, and in the evenings when we're cooking dinner and using appliances. Severe weather and other factors also impact how much electricity we need.

The challenge for electric providers is to plan for, produce and purchase enough electricity so it's available exactly when we need it. Too much or too little electricity in one place can cause problems. So, to make sure the whole system stays balanced, the electric grid must adjust in real time to changes and unforeseen events.

At its core, the electric grid is a network of power lines, transformers, substations and other infrastructure that span the entire country. But it's not just a singular system. It's divided into three major interconnected grids: Eastern Interconnection, Western

Interconnection and Electric Reliability Council of Texas. These grids operate independently but are linked to allow electricity to be transferred between regions when backup support is required.

Within the three regions, seven balancing authorities known as independent system operators (ISOs) or regional transmission organizations (RTOs) monitor the grid, signaling to power plants when more electricity is needed to maintain a balanced electrical flow. ISOs and RTOs are like traffic controllers for electricity.

The journey of electricity begins at power plants, which can be thought of as factories that make electricity using various energy sources like natural gas, solar, wind and nuclear energy. Across the U.S., more than 11,000 power plants deliver electricity to the grid.

Washington EMC receives power from energy providers Oglethorpe Power Corp., Cooperative Energy Inc. and others to provide electricity at the lowest cost possible.

To get the electricity from power plants to you, we need a transportation system. High-voltage transmission lines act as highways for electricity, transporting power over long distances. These lines are supported by massive towers and travel through vast landscapes, connecting power plants to electric substations.

Substations are like pit stops along the highway, where the voltage of electricity is adjusted. They play a crucial role in managing power flow and ensuring that electricity is safe for use



Wendy Sellers
President/CEO

in homes and businesses.

Once the electricity is reduced to the proper voltage, it travels through distribution power lines like the ones you typically see on the side of the road. Distribution lines carry electricity from substations to homes, schools and businesses. Distribution transformers, which look like metal buckets on the tops of power poles or large green boxes on the ground, further reduce the voltage to levels suitable for household appliances and electronic devices.

After traveling through transformers, electricity reaches you—to power everyday life.

We're proud to be your local, trusted energy provider. From the time it's created to the time it's used, electricity travels great distances to be available at the flip of a switch. That's what makes the electric grid our nation's most complex machine—and one of our nation's greatest achievements.



WashingtonEMC

A Member-owned Electric Cooperative

An electric membership corporation

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OFFICE HOURS

8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Monday through Friday

PHONES

Local (478) 552-2577

Long distance (800) 552-2577

24-HOUR CALL CENTER

To report a power interruption
please call:

Local (478) 552-2577

Long distance (800) 552-2577

BRANCH LOCATIONS

12860 Broad St.

Sparta, GA 31087

Closed on Thursday

100 W. College St.

Wrightsville, GA 31096

Closed on Wednesday

Convenient bill pay options include:

Drive-thru payment window

319 N. Smith St., Sandersville, GA 31082

Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Pay your bill online

www.washingtonemc.com

Use the free Washington EMC mobile app

Look for WEMC in the

App Store or Android Market.

Pay by phone

(478) 552-2577 or (800) 552-2577

SLOW INTERNET IS SO 2023!

Leave buffering screens and a lagging connection behind
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*Connect Ultimate offers download speeds of up to 2 gigabits per second; upload speeds are typically between 1 and 2 gigabits per second. 2 gigabit speeds can be obtained by directly connecting via ethernet cable to the ONT. The device conducting the speed test must be capable of sending and receiving data at a minimum of 2 gigabits of throughput.

DON'T MISS OUT!

Check your availability at
www.conexonconnect.com,
call (844) 542-6663
or scan our QR Code!



Holiday office closing

Washington EMC

offices will be

closed Monday,

January 15, in

observance of

Martin Luther King

Jr. Day.



Walter Harrison Scholarship

Washington EMC is accepting applications for the Walter Harrison Scholarship. High school seniors who reside in the household of a Washington EMC member can apply for the Walter Harrison Scholarship until January 19. The \$1,000 scholarship may be used at any Georgia accredited college, university or technical school.

Sixteen winners will be selected statewide. Applications can be obtained from your school counselor or by contacting Washington EMC Walter Harrison Scholarship Coordinator Denise Wombles at (800) 552-2577 or online at www.washingtonemc.com.



Honoring our military veterans



HONORING THE BRAVE WITH A VETERANS DAY BBQ

Washington EMC was proud to honor our military veterans and their immediate families to a barbecue lunch November 10, 2023. It was a great day of fellowship and to show our appreciation for the ones we owe so much!



Community news

The Operation Round Up board met October 30 and approved funding for the following organizations:

- Burn Foundation of America
- City of Sparta–Animal Control
- JOCO Action Team–Ferst Readers
- Johnson County High School Tennis Team
- Miriam Ministries
- Promise of Hope
- Serenity Foundation Gives

- T J Elder Middle School
- Washington County High School–Math
- Washington County Senior Citizen Center

We are so proud to be able to give back to the ones making a difference in our communities. The next board meeting will be January 31, and the deadline for applications is **December 31**. For more information, visit our website at www.washingtonemc.com.



The 2023 Washington Youth Tour was a huge success



By Lindsay Penticuff

Georgia's 104 Washington Youth Tour (WYT) delegates were among nearly 2,000 students from across the country who visited Washington, D.C., last year for the annual Washington Youth Tour.

With 34 electric membership cooperatives (EMCs) in Georgia participating, the 2023 event held June 15-22 was the Youth Tour's 58th year in Georgia.

Once a year, high school students are selected by Georgia's EMCs to represent Georgia as delegates on the Youth Tour. This top-notch leadership experience and tour of Washington, D.C., includes meetings with state and national leaders, leadership training and visits to many major sites.

"This year's tour was a huge success!" says Andy Paul, WYT director and public relations representative with Tucker-based Georgia EMC. "I would describe it as a connection-making trip, as students from rural areas of our state connected with students from urban areas, and they made lifelong friendships."

During the 2023 trip, delegates visited many national



KATHRYN GREEN

From left, 2023 WYT delegates Gracie Foskey and Emerson Sheppard pose in front of the Lincoln Memorial.



KAREN EWING

memorials, including the National Mall, Lincoln Memorial, Smithsonian Institution and United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and they participated in a wreath-laying ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery's Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

"It was so great to see students connect their local EMC with opportunities like this for learning and success for their local communities," Paul adds, "and all on a trip that is at no cost to the students!"



Apply for the 2024 Washington Youth Tour

Washington EMC is accepting applications for the 2024 Washington Youth Tour. To be eligible, students must attend school within the Washington EMC service area, be a high school junior, be at least 16 years old by June 15, 2024, and have parent or guardian permission to enter and participate.

More information and applications can be obtained from your school counselor or by contacting Washington EMC Youth Tour Coordinator Denise Wombles at (800) 552-2577 or online at www.washingtonemc.com. Applications are due January 19.