

THE LAMPLIGHTER

Official Member Newsletter of Washington EMC

April 2025

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

Lineworkers are wired for service

In the quiet hours before dawn breaks, while many of us are still nestled in our beds, lineworkers begin their day, often clad in flame-resistant clothing, safety goggles, rubber gloves and thick, heavy boots.

They are the individuals who epitomize dedication to service in its purest form. As we celebrate Lineworker Appreciation Day on April 14, this is an important moment to reflect on the essential role they play in our daily lives.

Amid towering utility poles and power lines, lineworkers exhibit a strength that goes far beyond the physical. Whether battling inclement weather, troubleshooting technical problems or navigating treacherous heights, lineworkers demonstrate resilience and a quiet determination to keep our lights on, our homes comfortable and our communities connected.

Washington EMC crews travel

across our 10-county service territory, building, maintaining and repairing parts of our local system. Their extraordinary skills ensure our homes remain connected to the grid, businesses stay operational and emergency services remain accessible—a lifeline that connects us all.

In moments of crisis, when the lights go out and we find ourselves in the dark, lineworkers emerge as beacons of hope. Their swift response restores normalcy, offering reassurance in times of uncertainty. Whether repairing storm-ravaged power lines or ensuring continuity during emergencies, their unwavering commitment illuminates life when we need it most. This was demonstrated heroically this past fall, when Hurricane Helene made its way through our service territory and created a path of destruction that required days upon days of restoration and repair.



Wendy Sellers
President/CEO

Washington EMC's lineworkers also answer the call beyond the boundaries of home, just as we relied on several mutual-aid crews during our Hurricane Helene restoration efforts. Our crews travel to fellow co-ops, near or far, when widespread outages occur and additional support is needed.

Cooperation Among Cooperatives is one of our seven guiding principles, and no one embodies this core commitment better than lineworkers.

This month, as we celebrate the remarkable men and women who ensure reliable power, let's recognize their unwavering dedication to the local communities they serve.

The next time you flip a switch, please take a moment to remember those who make it possible—lineworkers, who are wired for service and dedicated to illuminating life.





WashingtonEMC

A Member-owned Electric Cooperative

An electric membership corporation

258 N. Harris St. • P.O. Box 598
Sandersville, GA 31082

Email: wemc@washingtonemc.com

Website: www.washingtonemc.com

Wendy Sellers, President/CEO

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mildred W. Jackson,

Chair, Tennille

Mike Beckworth,

Vice Chair, Harrison

Mike McDonald,

Secretary/Treasurer, Warrenton

Brenda English, *Milledgeville*

Billy Helton, *Warthen*

Jeff Lacksen, *Sparta*

Ken Vickers, *Wrightsville*

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.

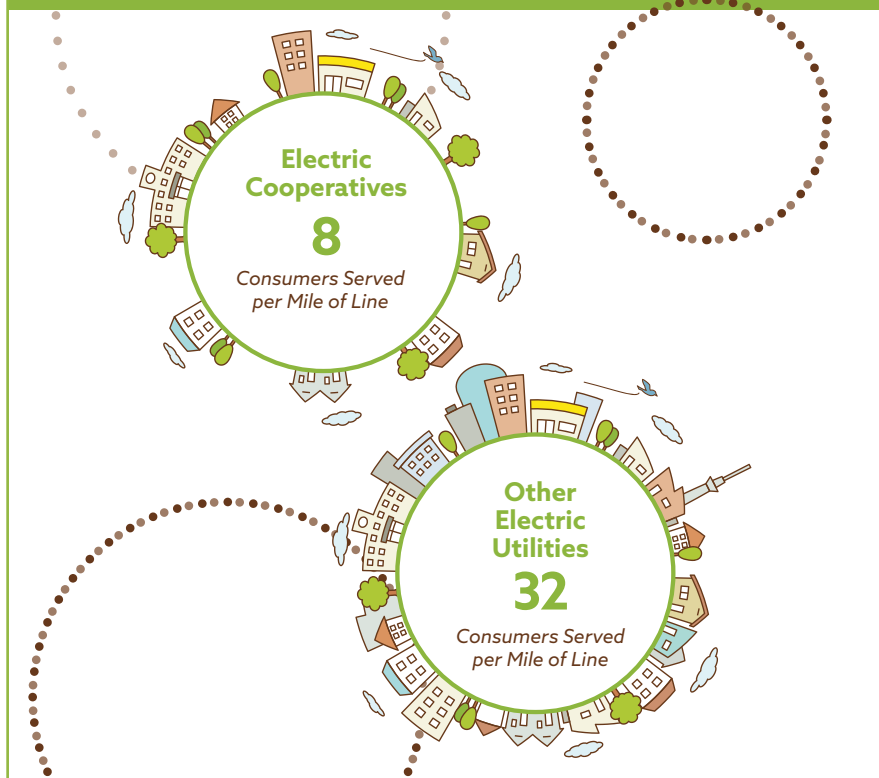
Pay by phone

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

ELECTRIC CO-OP SERVICE DENSITY compared to OTHER ELECTRIC UTILITIES

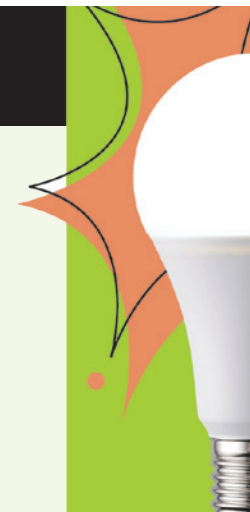
Electric cooperatives maintain more power lines per consumer than other types of electric utilities.

Even though we serve fewer consumers per mile of line, we will always go the extra mile for our members.



ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Turn your suds into savings. Lower your energy use in the laundry room by washing clothes with cold water whenever possible, as heating water accounts for most of the energy used in a laundry cycle. Wash full loads to make the most of energy savings, and use high-efficiency detergent designed for cold washes. For drying cycles, clean the lint filter before each load to improve airflow and use dryer balls to reduce drying time.



Preparing for the ever-changing electricity demand

By Scott Flood

When electricity demand outpaces supply of any commodity—corn, gasoline and electricity—prices tend to rise. In addition, there's increasing concern about the potential for rolling brownouts and blackouts as power providers struggle to meet peak demands.

Local co-op members may not notice the impact of the supply-demand imbalance for some time, but it's captured the attention of electric co-op directors and their staffs.

"The leadership at many electric co-ops is seeing unprecedented growth in demand," explains Stephanie Crawford, NRECA regulatory affairs director.

A decade ago, a huge commercial project might have boosted a co-op's total load by 20-30 megawatts, but today they're getting multiple requests for projects in the hundreds of megawatts, she adds.

Artificial intelligence (AI) and cloud computing are key drivers of this added demand. As use of AI skyrockets, and a greater share of computer applications and storage migrate

to the cloud, all that data needs to be stored somewhere. Data centers, which are massive groups of high-capacity computer servers, provide the most efficient way to handle it.

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, data centers can consume as much as 50 times the energy per floor space of other types

of commercial buildings. A single large data center may use more than 100 megawatts of power, enough to power 80,000 households. Data centers already account for nearly 2% of the nation's electricity use, and the Electric Power Research Institute predicts that will grow to 9% by 2030.

"It's not only a question of needing to build or obtain more capacity, but in many cases, it also creates questions about the availability of transmission and distribution," Crawford notes.

For electric co-ops, the efforts fall into two categories: increasing knowledge and building relationships. A generation ago, power supply discussions were a fairly straightforward and easily understood process for co-op directors, given the widespread availability of baseload generation.



A single large data center may use 100-plus megawatts of power, which is enough to power 80,000 households.

Today's directors increasingly find themselves learning about sophisticated and challenging issues as they weigh decisions affecting their co-op's operations and financial viability for years to come.

Co-ops have long emphasized relationship-building, and Crawford stresses the importance of doing that with the companies developing large projects like data centers.

"Early and frequent conversations between the co-op and the entities seeking additional energy are critical," she says. "That has to include honest conversations about the costs and timelines involved."

For example, while a data center project might ultimately need a significant supply of megawatts, if its operations are phased in gradually over several years, the co-op may have additional time to prepare for the maximum load. They might consider creating a partnership with the project owner to develop new generation assets on the project's site, reducing transmission concerns.

The large tech companies involved in deploying data centers and similar projects are highly sophisticated and well-resourced. They tend to be less interested in obtaining the lowest cost and more focused on reliability.

"What we're hearing from co-ops is that the companies building data centers typically have done their homework before they start talking to co-ops," Crawford says. "Many are anxious to develop their projects at a faster pace than the co-op may be accustomed to."

In addition, Crawford notes the importance of co-op leaders keeping a finger on the pulse of their existing commercial accounts.

"Being proactive and reaching out to understand how a commercial account's energy needs may be changing in the coming years will inform conversations and decisions about timing, rate design and other factors, even if they're not making specific requests yet," she says. "That will help the co-op serve emerging needs while protecting the reliability for all of its members."

Scott Flood works with electric cooperatives to build knowledge of energy-related issues among directors, staff and members. He writes on a variety of energy-related topics for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing nearly 900 electric co-ops.

As the demand for electricity continues to increase, America's peak demand is forecast to grow by 38 gigawatts through 2029—the equivalent of adding another California-sized state to the nation's power grid.



PIXABAY

NO TRICKS. NO GIMMICKS. JUST FIBER-FAST INTERNET.

Don't be fooled.
Connect, powered by Washington EMC, is the way to go!

SIGN UP TODAY!

Visit www.conexonconnect.com,
scan the QR Code or call us at
(844) 542-6663 to sign up today!



SCAN ME

Connecting you
to your online
community.



Community news

The Operation Round Up Board met January 27 and approved funding for the following organizations: City of Sparta/Hancock Department of Public Health, Johnson County Community Action Team (CAT), Washington County 4-H, First Christian Church Bread of Life Ministry, Johnson County TD Club, Rosa M. Tarbuton Library, Sheppard Community Blood Center, Wilkinson County 4-H, Hancock Education Society

of Middle Georgia, Georgia's Old Capital Heritage Center and Burn Foundation of America.

We are always proud to be able to give back to organizations making a difference locally in our communities and regionally in our area. The next board meeting will be April 28, and the deadline for applications is March 31.

For more information, visit www.washingtonemc.com.

