



Plugged in to Altamaha EMC

VOLUME 15

NO. 5

DECEMBER 2014

LYONS, GA

The Official Newsletter of Altamaha Electric Membership Corporation

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

PREPARE NOW FOR WINTER WEATHER

Another colder-than-normal winter is predicted for much of the country this year. Being prepared for winter can make a world of difference. Frigid temperatures can cause heating systems to work over time, and since heating and cooling can make up nearly half of your electric bill, you may experience sticker shock when you open that bill. Instead of waiting until after a potentially high bill is in your mailbox, be proactive. There are things you can do now to help ensure you are managing your energy use and spending less.

Winterize Your Home

- Wrap exposed pipes and water heaters that are in unconditioned spaces.
- Maintain and inspect heating equipment and chimneys every year to ensure they are working safely and properly.
- Change your air filter once a month.
- Keep drapes closed at night and keep those that don't get direct sunlight closed during the day, too.
- Keep the fireplace damper closed when it is not in use. Keeping it open can bring cold air into the room.
- Caulk around the fireplace hearth, and caulk or weather strip around doors and windows.
- Consider installing storm windows for better insulation. You can also cover windows with plastic (from the inside) to keep the cold air out.
- Dress for the weather, even if you are inside. Wearing long sleeves and pants, or wrapping up in a cozy blanket, will combat the temptation of bumping up the thermostat.

The tips above can help you manage your energy use, but your bill may still be higher during the winter months. This is because weather impacts electric bills. Even those with the most efficient HVAC systems will use more electricity in extreme temperatures. Cold temperatures cause our heaters to work overtime.

For example, even if you set your thermostat to our recommended 68 degrees in the winter, when it is 19 degrees outside, your system has to work

hard to make up that 49-degree difference.

Remember, there is value in comfort. For us to be comfortable in our homes, our heaters are going to work harder, but it may be worth the additional cost to you.

Prepare a winter survival kit

Winter storms often lead to downed power lines and extended outages. Altamaha EMC crews will work hard to restore power, but having a winter survival kit on hand is a smart idea.

- **Food:** Store food that does not require cooking, such as canned goods, crackers, dehydrated meats and dried fruit. Keep a large supply of water on hand. Experts recommend five gallons of water per person.
- **Medication:** Be sure to refill all prescriptions if the weather conditions are predicted to cause a major power outage.
- **Identification:** Keep all forms of identification handy, such as driver's licenses and social security cards. Bank account information and insurance policies are also good to have on hand.
- **Other items:** First Aid Kit, blankets, flashlight, battery-powered radio and extra batteries.

Stay warm and safe

If an outage occurs, you should have a plan in place for an alternate heating source like a fireplace, propane space heater or wood-burning stove. Fuel and wood-burning heating sources should always be vented, and make sure carbon monoxide and smoke detectors are working properly. Always practice extreme caution when using alternate heating sources.

If you decide to use a portable generator during an outage, make sure it is placed outside the home for proper ventilation. Be careful not to overload the generator. Use appropriate extension cords that can handle the electric load.



GA09420G

78th Annual Meeting Highlights

The 78th annual meeting of the members of Altamaha EMC was held on November 5th at Southeastern Technical College in Vidalia. A total of 796 members registered for the meeting.

CEO Romanous Dotson addressed the crowd to discuss how Altamaha EMC is rooted in the communities we serve. Bryan Isgett of McNair, McLemore, Middlebrooks and Co. reviewed the cooperative's financial reports showing the sound financial position of Altamaha EMC.

Directors Billy Benton, Brandon Braddy and Robert E. Youmans were each re-elected by acclamation to a three-year term on the board.

Door prizes were awarded after the meeting adjourned. All members and guests were given a bucket with prizes and treated to refreshments as they left the meeting.



A special thanks to Lasseter Implement of Lyons for allowing us to use the John Deere tractors to pull the shuttles.



James Halligan, Ricky Coleman and Mark Davis take time out for a picture before the annual meeting started.



Romanous Dotson awards the \$100 grand prize to Dorothy Copeland of Vidalia.



Jeffery Lawson delivers a door prize to the lucky winner, Peggy Cox of Soperton.



Ann Barfield and Sue Grisham were all smiles as they left the meeting after winning a door prize.



Members enjoyed a shuttle ride from the parking lot to the front door of Southeastern Technical College.



All members were treated to Little Debbie Snack Cakes as they left the meeting.

Don't let energy efficiency take a holiday

No matter what or how you celebrate, energy use tends to increase during the holiday season. With more guests in your home and activities taking place, your electric meter spins a little faster than usual, costing you more money. Start the new year off right. Celebrate the holidays efficiently so you don't have to worry about a high electric bill.

Decorating

- If you decorate with strings of lights, consider LED (light-emitting diode) options. They use over 80 percent less energy than traditional strings of lights and have a longer life. Make sure to purchase high-quality strings from reputable sources. Safety and the lifetime can be compromised in less expensive LED strands.
- Solar-powered lighting options are also worth considering for decorations. Instead of having a plug handy, make sure you have a proper location for the solar panel that powers them.



- Place strands of electric lights on timers so they automatically turn on in the evening after the sun sets, and turn off around bedtime. You won't have to think



- about plugging and unplugging them, or spend money powering them when unnecessary.
- Decorate with less lighting. Consider a natural, vintage feel for your decorations. Use items like pinecones, greenery, candy canes, popcorn strings and gingerbread. The whole family can get involved in decorating the home with these safe and festive items.

Cooking

- Cook with your microwave, toaster oven or slow cooker whenever possible. Small appliances cook quickly and more efficiently than your oven.
- When you do use the oven, cook more than one item at a time. Have a ham, sweet potato casserole and rolls that all need to cook in the oven? Make some adjustments to cooking temperatures and times, and put all your dishes in at once to take full advantage of the heat that's being produced.
- Don't peek! It's tempting to open the oven door to check on holiday treats. Use the oven light instead,

and keep the door closed. This will retain the heat where it belongs—inside the oven.

- Glass and ceramic dishes allow you to cook food at a lower temperature than metal baking dishes. If the recipe calls for a metal baking pan, and you substitute glass or ceramic cookware, reduce the temperature by about 25 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Have food defrosted before you cook. Simply planning ahead can cut cooking times and energy use in half. Place any frozen dishes in the refrigerator the night before so they are ready to go in the oven the next morning.

Around the house

- Turn down your home's thermostat a few degrees. Extra people bustling around the home and the oven warming food will heat up your home a few more degrees. Take advantage and adjust your thermostat accordingly. You will save some money on your bill, and your guests will still be comfortable.

FACILITIES CHARGE INCREASES

Effective January 1, 2015, Altamaha EMC will implement a facilities charge increase. The new rates are as follows:

<u>Rate Class</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>Facilities Charge</u>
Residential	RFS-8	\$17.50
Small Commercial	SP-8	\$17.50
Large Power	LPS-8	\$55.00
Industrial	IS-8	\$275.00
School	SCH-1	\$135.00
Irrigation (per HP)	IRGS-8	\$0.60

Give the Gift of Electricity this Holiday Season

Looking for a good gift for a family member or friend?

**Altamaha EMC has the answer for you...
a POWER GIFT CERTIFICATE!**



Sometimes finding the perfect gift is almost impossible. Sizes, tastes, even needs differ with every person. But almost everyone has an electric bill. So, what better gift to give someone you care about than the gift of electricity.

The Altamaha EMC POWER GIFT CERTIFICATE makes it easy for you to provide a credit on a relative or friend's electric account. Just provide us the member's name, address and if possible their account number. We'll handle the rest. You may pay by cash, check or debit/credit card.

Altamaha EMC will provide you a certificate to give to them, or at your request, we will mail the certificate to them. Power gift certificates can also be given anonymously.

Stop by our office or call us today for more details.

HOLIDAY CLOSING NOTICE

The board of directors, management and employees of Altamaha EMC extend to you and your family our best wishes for a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous and Happy New Year!

In observance of the holiday season, the offices of Altamaha EMC will be closed December 25, December 26 and January 1.

In the event of a power outage or related problems, standby personnel will be on duty. You can report power outages by calling (912) 526-8181 or (800) 822-4563.



Member RECIPES

Microwave Peanut Brittle

Ingredients

Butter, to grease baking sheet
1 cup sugar
1/2 cup light corn syrup
1 heaping cup raw Georgia peanuts
1/8 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon butter
1 to 1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1 teaspoon baking soda

Directions

Grease a baking sheet with butter; set aside. In a microwave-safe bowl, combine sugar, corn syrup, peanuts and salt. Microwave on high for 4 minutes. Stir and microwave an additional 4 minutes. Stir in butter and microwave on high for 2-4 minutes, depending on wattage of microwave. Note: The mixture should start to turn deep golden but not too brown. Stir in vanilla and baking soda, mixing quickly. Note: Mixture will be light and foamy. Pour quickly onto prepared baking sheet, spreading as thin as possible. Let cool. When cooled, break into pieces; store in an airtight container. Tip: Soak mixing bowl in hot sudsy water for easier clean up. Yields about 16 servings.

—Courtesy of Georgia Grown



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