

Along the LINE

JUNE 2023

For members of
Edgecombe-Martin County EMC

Revised Renewable Energy and EE Riders Become Effective July 1

In July 2023, updated renewable energy and energy efficiency rider charges will be applied to Edgecombe-Martin County EMC members' bills to recoup the incremental costs associated with the state mandated REPS (Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard).

These two riders appear on your bill as the NC Renewable Charge and the NC EE Charge. The NC Renewable Charge has been billed monthly as follows since July 2022: Residential, \$0.28; Commercial, \$1.56; Industrial, \$10.45.

Beginning with the July 2023 billing, the rates will be billed as follows: Residential, \$0.47; Commercial, \$2.63; Industrial, \$17.52.

The NC EE Charge will also be updated for all bills rendered after July 1, 2023, and the current charge will increase from \$0.000869 per kilowatt hour to \$0.0009 per kilowatt hour.

Each of these riders will be reviewed annually and updated if approved by your board of directors in July. Changes in each rate come from participation in additional renewable energy projects and implementation of energy efficiency programs.



Edgecombe-Martin County EMC's participation as a member of NCEMC has allowed us to make market purchases of various types of renewable energy to help keep us in compliance with the NC REPS. We will keep you informed as we work to meet the required compliance standards set forth in this energy legislation.

**Swim smart.
Swim safely.**

Prevent electric shock drowning.

Learn more at
**Safe
Electricity.org**

2023 Poletop and Bucket Rescue Training

In April, Edgecombe-Martin County EMC Line technicians participated in our annual pole top and bucket rescue training.

As an OSHA-mandated safety training requirement, the course is designed to evaluate each line technician on their ability to properly rescue an injured and/or stranded line technician.

During the training, each line technician must execute a scenario that finds a fellow worker unconscious atop a utility pole. The line technician, dressed in full climbing gear, must radio for help, scale 20 feet up the utility pole, lower a 170-pound mannequin and begin lifesaving procedures. All line technicians must complete this same scenario in less than five minutes to maintain their certification. In addition to the Pole Top Rescue, the Bucket Truck Rescue Simulation must also be completed. This simulated rescue mission includes an “unconscious victim” in a bucket that needs to be lowered to the ground and given CPR. These are skills that you hope a

line technician never needs to use. But if they do, the training is an opportunity to prepare and hone their skills if the need should ever arise.

Two of the fastest runs for the pole-top rescue were Blake Fleming with a time of 2 minutes, 27 seconds, and Samuel Flythe with 2 minutes, 52 seconds. The fastest runs for the bucket rescue were Will Scott, with a time of 43 seconds, and Thomas Hardison, at a time of 48 seconds.



Line Technician Career Development

Edgecombe-Martin County EMC recently completed a series of events for high school students across our service territory.

The camps were hosted on April 17–20 in partnership with area schools. Drawing nearly 225 participants from multiple high schools, students were given the opportunity to learn firsthand about potential careers in the electric utility industry. A training site was used during the camp to provide hands-on training for students.

The first of its kind in North Carolina, this program is an annual event for all local high schools. The response to the program has been tremendous. Our events had an average attendance of about 56 students each day. The students were engaged throughout the day – their genuine enthusiasm was evident. We try to give them a well-



rounded look at the work done by those who build and maintain our electric distribution lines, so they can better consider

if they're cut out for the life of a line technician. The job isn't for everyone, but it's clear that the students all enjoy learning about their co-op, the electric utility industry, and the unique aspects of the line technician's career.

There is an important role for co-ops to play in their communities when it comes to workforce development. The comfort of knowing we have solid jobs, with competitive pay and benefits, is a long-term commitment. Our high school students need to see what our community offers. Therefore, if we can inspire just one child to realize a dream, it's all worth it.

We're thankful to the many school systems that worked with us over the last few months to encourage students to attend our camp — these are exactly the kinds of community partnerships that will benefit our young people, and expand their potential career options. With an increase in line technician retirements across North Carolina and the nation over the next decade, it is an occupation that should be strongly considered. Especially if you enjoy being outdoors, this just may be the perfect job for you. Make no mistake, it is hard work; but it can be a very rewarding and fulfilling career path.

Rate Adjustment Information

October 2023 will mark six years since Edgecombe-Martin County EMC implemented our last rate adjustment. As your local, not-for-profit electric cooperative, our primary goal is to provide you with safe, affordable, and reliable electricity.

Like many of you, Edgecombe-Martin County EMC has felt the effects of inflation. Despite Edgecombe-Martin County EMC's efforts to manage costs responsibly, the price of keeping the lights on continues to rise. For electric utilities, material, labor, equipment and fuel costs have increased substantially over the past several years.

For example, a 15 kVA transformer that we paid \$693 for in 2020, cost \$896 in 2021 and then rose further in 2022 to \$1,058. That's a 29% increase in cost from 2020 to 2021 followed by another 18% increase from 2021 to 2022.

Much of our equipment has followed the same pattern. Our 350 underground wire was \$1.99 per foot in 2020, \$2.71 per foot in 2021 and then \$3.30 per foot in 2022. Those are increases of 36% and then an additional 22%.

Edgecombe-Martin County EMC recently concluded a cost-of-service study (COSS) and rate analysis. This process is very detailed, and an abundance of data must be collected in order to provide an accurate analysis. Completing the cost-of-service study and rate analysis ensures we provide rates that are fair and equitable to all members while fulfilling our duty of keeping your cooperative financially sound.

It is our goal to provide our members with affordable rates while managing costs effectively. However, the fact still remains that the cost of power continues to rise, as does the cost of many other goods and services.

Your Cooperative is constantly looking for ways to operate more efficiently. We've been able to keep rates stable for more than five years by managing costs.



Although Edgecombe-Martin County EMC has worked to keep rates stable, there comes a time when adjustments to our rate schedules are necessary to cover increasing costs. Watch the coming issues of Along the Line for more details on future rate adjustments. Thank you in advance for your understanding as we work to implement rates and policies that are in the best interest of the membership.

Cooperatively,

Winston Howell
Winston Howell

Please Inform Your Co-op Before Adding Load to Your Service

Don't forget to let Edgecombe-Martin County EMC know about any changes that may have been made that have added load to your service.

As electric vehicle technology improves, and the cost of electric vehicles decreases, more Americans will continue to make the switch to electric. If you own or are considering the purchase of a plug-in electric vehicle, please let us know so that we can ensure our equipment is set up to properly handle the increased load and help you save energy and money!

Due to advancements in technology, modern farms and agricultural operations work far differently than those a few decades ago. These changes include the

sensors, devices, machines, and information technology. We need to be informed of any changes or upgrades you have made to your operations since last year's curing season. It is possible that we may need to make changes to our distribution system to allow for any added load, such as additional bulk barns or grain dryers.

Call the Cooperative at 1-800-445-6486 or 252-823-2171 to let us know of any change to your account(s).



Edgecombe-Martin County EMC offers a special EV rate for owners who use most of their energy overnight when charging their vehicle. The co-op also provides a \$200 rebate for members with an electric vehicle to help with electric service improvements to charge their EV.



June Rights-of-Way

In order to provide safe, reliable electrical service, we maintain the rights-of-way under and around our power lines.

We do this through rights-of-way and vegetation management. This requires pruning, removing, and cutting vegetation to prevent interruption of your electric service.

Throughout June, Lucas Tree Experts will be trimming Highway 43, and Bynum Farm Road in the Pinetops area, and various hotspots on the system.

Along The LINE

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