



# Along the LINE

**October 2023**

For members of  
Edgecombe-Martin County EMC

## Holiday Season Blanket Drive

As the colder months approach, we are thrilled to announce our upcoming initiative of hosting a blanket drive throughout October and November.

Last year we were completely overwhelmed by the response to our Christmas toy drive campaign. While our tradition of collecting non-perishable food items for donation to local food pantries has been an unwavering source of support, this year we were inspired to take a new path that would extend a heartfelt touch to even more members of our community, offering them comfort during the upcoming winter months.

We decided to host a blanket drive this winter. Our goal is to bring warmth and comfort to those in need within our community. By participating in this drive, we aim to collect as many blankets as possible and distribute them to local shelters, cancer centers, nursing homes and homeless individuals. Together, let's create a positive impact and provide some much-needed warmth and care to our community.

We will be accepting blankets at our office throughout the months of October and November during normal business hours.



## Member Appreciation Day

Each year, Edgecombe-Martin County EMC holds Member Appreciation Day in October to show appreciation for our member-owners and to recognize the importance of cooperatives around the world. This year Member Appreciation Day will be held on Wednesday, Oct. 11, 2023. We look forward to seeing you there!



## Cutler Earns Advanced Degree

Alissa Cutler has recently achieved her Master's in Business Administration from North Carolina Wesleyan college.

Alissa has dedicated seven years to our cooperative, and currently serves as an Accounting Representative. Winston Howell, CEO of Edgecombe-Martin County EMC, expressed, "We are proud of Alissa and the dedication she has put forth to fulfil her degree requirements. We strongly believe that investing in our most valuable resource yields enduring rewards. Our employees recognize the significance of education and also appreciate that the true value of this investment shines when they employ their knowledge to enhance the services we provide to our valued member-owners."



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## High School Students: Apply for a Trip to Washington, D.C.

Edgecombe-Martin County EMC is now accepting applications for the 2024 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour program. This exceptional initiative presents an opportunity for one student to embark on a fully-funded journey to Washington, D.C., in June 2024.

Participating in the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour program provides an unparalleled experience for the selected students. Among these delegates, one representative from Edgecombe-Martin County EMC will join a distinguished group of over 1,500 high school students from across the nation.

This journey serves as an educational platform to delve into the realms of electric cooperatives, American history, and the intricate workings of the United States government. Furthermore, participants will have the privilege of exploring the historic landmarks of our nation's capital, engaging with their congressional leaders, and connecting with Youth



*Caleb Thompson was Edgecombe-Martin County EMC's 2023 Youth Tourist*

Tour alumni who have gone on to serve as interns or staffers on Capitol Hill.

Eligibility for this opportunity requires applicants to currently be enrolled in their junior year (rising seniors). For more information or to fill out an application contact Monica Speight at 252-823-2171 or [monicas@ememc.com](mailto:monicas@ememc.com).



At Edgecombe-Martin County EMC, our foremost priority is always safety. Safety isn't limited to wearing protective gear and following proper work procedures. An important aspect of the safety of our community is safe driving and increasing awareness about the dangers of distracted driving.

Distracted driving can happen in many different ways. The first thing that most people think of when they hear distracted driving, is texting and driving. The term, however, encompasses much more than just texting. It could be any distraction that may take one's attention away from the road ahead: car conversations, kids in the back seat, eating, music, GPS, personal grooming, and more. The notion that it's harmless to momentarily look away from the road to retrieve something from the glovebox or hand a snack to a child can lead to significant changes in your path within mere seconds.

While the dangers of working with high-voltage power lines and electrical equipment are well-known, it's easy for individuals to overlook those risks once they're behind the wheel of their own vehicle. However, the connection between safe driving and the responsibility of an electric cooperative is more intertwined than it may initially appear.

The rationale behind the electric cooperative's resolute focus on combatting distracted driving extends beyond a simple concern for well-being, although that undoubtedly remains a paramount consideration. Our dedication to community safety is reinforced by the revealing data from the last three years. Over this span, Edgecombe-Martin County EMC faced a total of 25 power outages due to vehicle accidents that resulted in pole strikes, necessitating pole replacement.

The implications of such occurrences extend far beyond a mere inconvenience. When an accident triggers a power outage, the downtime for members while repairs are made can be very lengthy. The extent of this disruption hinges on the severity of the event. For instance, a fractured utility pole is categorized as a severe incident, necessitating a considerable allocation of both time and resources for the intricate restoration process.

If you are in a car accident involving a power line on your vehicle, stay inside the vehicle. Only leave a vehicle that is in contact with a downed power line if the vehicle catches on fire. Warn people not to

touch the vehicle or the downed power line. If you are standing on the ground, do not attempt to help someone else out of the car.

In these situations, the broader community's response comes into play. Swift action entails dispatching not only ambulances but also a coordinated effort involving police, firetrucks, Department of Transportation, and EMTs. Concurrently, the cooperative must mobilize its skilled line technicians, deploy trucks, and leverage specialized equipment to expedite power restoration. Furthermore, if such incidents unfold outside regular operating hours, the cooperative is confronted with the additional financial burden of overtime expenses. The typical expense incurred by our electric cooperative due to an accident resulting in a broke utility pole is \$3,750.

Speaking of distracted driving, it's imperative to remind our members of North Carolina's Move Over law. This law serves as a safeguard for State Troopers, law enforcement officers, emergency personnel, and utility workers who find themselves stationed along our highways. The law mandates that motorists reduce speed and approach cautiously when encountering an emergency vehicle on the shoulder of the road with its flashing lights activated. On multi-lane highways, motorists are required to either move over to another lane away from the emergency vehicle or decelerate safely on a two-lane road while maintaining a prudent speed. It's a reminder that responsible driving is not only crucial for personal safety but also a means of respecting and ensuring the safety of those who diligently serve our communities.

At Edgecombe-Martin County EMC safety is foremost in everything we do, for our employees and the members of the communities we serve. We routinely remind our crews of the dangers of distracted driving, and we hope you'll have similar conversations with your teens who may be new to the roadways and are especially susceptible to the lure of technology. Let's work together to keep everyone safe on the roads. Remember: that text can wait, and waiting just might save a life.

Cooperatively Yours,  
*Winston Howell*  
Winston Howell



## Website Has a New Look

We are excited to announce that our website has undergone a complete redesign, showcasing a fresh and modern look while retaining the same valuable content you've come to rely on.

With this update, navigating through the website has become even more user-friendly, making it easier than ever to find the information you need. Our main home page is now a dynamic hub, regularly updated with current news and events for you to scroll through and stay informed.

Whether you're a long-time visitor or a newcomer, we are confident that the revamped design will enhance your browsing experience and keep you engaged with the latest updates and resources. Explore the new look and discover the familiar, reliable content with improved accessibility today at [ememc.com](http://ememc.com)!



## Along The LINE

[www.ememc.com](http://www.ememc.com)

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## October Rights-of-Way Schedule

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 brush to prevent vegetation from interrupting your electric service.

During October, Lucas Tree Experts will utilize the sky trim, buckets and bushhogging equipment, in the Hobgood and Oak City areas, as well as addressing various hotspots on the system.

