



Along the LINE

FEBRUARY 2020

For members of
Edgecombe-Martin County EMC



2019 Annual Meeting

Join us for the 83rd Annual Meeting of Members

Edgecombe-Martin County EMC invites everyone to our 83rd Annual Meeting, Saturday, March 21, 2020.

The Annual Meeting of Members is designed to deliver information to the membership concerning state and national issues that affect the co-op, financial data from the previous year, and our financial outlook for the year ahead.

Register to Win Prizes

Registration will begin at 10 a.m. Members who register will be eligible to win one of the 15, \$83 electric bill credits. Members' children will be eligible to win one of four \$83 Walmart gift cards.

Mark Your Calendars

As usual, registration and festivities will begin at 10 a.m. and the business session will start at 12 p.m. A catered lunch will be provided starting

at 10 a.m. for members and their immediate family. Live entertainment will also take place before the business session, and children can enjoy outside amusements during the business session.

So, mark your calendar for Saturday, March 21, and come join the fun. Please look for your annual meeting notice and member registration card on the front of the next issue of Carolina Country magazine, and remember to bring it with you to the 83rd Annual Meeting.

If you are a member with special needs and you plan to attend this meeting, please contact the cooperative at (252) 641-9502, by Wednesday, March 4, so we can work to accommodate your request.



Ronald McDonald House®
Eastern North Carolina

You can make an impact at the Ronald McDonald House of Eastern North Carolina by donating items on the House's wish list at our Annual Meeting.

Please remember the House is just like your home and can use many of the same items you use each day.

For the health and safety of House guests and volunteers, items should be new. Due to stringent health codes, please do not forget to check expiration dates.

Listed below are the most needed items at the Ronald McDonald House of Eastern North Carolina.

- **Individual Snacks**
- **Fruit Cups**
- **Napkins**
- **Paper Plates/Bowls**
- **Canned Chicken**
- **Canned Pasta**

Touchstone Energy Sports Camp: Apply Now

Edgecombe-Martin County EMC is giving two local middle school students an opportunity to dust off those sneakers and hit the hardwood alongside their favorite college basketball athletes and coaches this summer, thanks to Touchstone Energy Sports Camp Scholarships.



Touchstone Energy®
**Sports Camp
Scholarships**

Edgecombe-Martin County EMC will select one young man for a scholarship to attend the Roy Williams Carolina Basketball Camp at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and one local young woman for the Wolfpack Women's Basketball Camp at North Carolina State University in Raleigh.

"This is an exciting opportunity for young athletes to visit our state's largest universities and work directly with notable coaches

and student athletes," said Monica Speight, communication specialist of Edgecombe-Martin County EMC. "This scholarship is a way for our cooperative to support students who have a passion for sports and want to find new ways to excel. By earning the scholarships and going to camp, these young adults learn skills they can use on the court and in the classroom."

Applications are being accepted through March 31. Contestants will be judged on academic records, extra-

curricular activities and the content of an essay that must be submitted with the application. To be eligible to win, students must be in the sixth, seventh or eighth grade during the 2020-2021 school year and have permission from a parent or guardian. Winners are expected to be announced by May 1.

Eligible students who are interested in the scholarship can contact Monica Speight at 252-641-9502 or monicas@ememc.com for more information.

Electric Space Heaters Can Be Costly to Operate

As cold weather chills your home or buildings, you might consider electric space heaters or window unit heat pumps to supplement your heating.

There are many good reasons to use electric space heaters. Perhaps you are trying to supplement heat to parts of your home that are not sufficiently covered by your furnace, help that always-cold family member stay comfortable, or heat a work space that is not typically heated. Whatever the reason, electric space heaters are easy to come by, inexpensive to purchase, and portable.

We often caution members that electric space heaters, although convenient, could contribute to high electric bills when used excessively. Space heaters are meant to supplement your home's heating, not replace it.

There are many different kinds of space heaters but the reality is that almost all electric space heaters use the same amount of electricity. So no matter what it looks like and how much you spent on the unit, it will likely require 1,500 watts to operate.

There are many ways to remain warm during the chilly winter months without the use of an electric space

heater. There are small things you can do such as dressing in layers and using an electric blanket at night. Such ideas provide a quick solution, but may not be comfortable or convenient. A more permanent and cost effective solution is using a window unit heat pump in certain rooms.

Even in a home with a large heating and cooling system, there are frequently rooms that do not get the full benefit of the system. Installing a window unit heat pump in these spaces can keep them from being the rooms you close off or avoid during months with extreme temperatures. Running a window unit heat pump during these months may also help reduce the energy cost of the larger system while making any room more comfortable.



Key Legislation Passes to Support Electric Cooperatives

On December 19, 2019, Congress passed a sweeping government funding bill; and shortly after, President Trump signed the legislation into law, protecting more than 900 electric cooperatives throughout the nation.

Included in the funding bill was the RURAL Act, which protects electric cooperatives from the risk of losing their tax-exempt status when they accept government grants for disaster relief, economic development loans, and other programs that benefit co-op members.

The RURAL Act was NRECA's top legislative priority for the year because of the profound threat to the business model of not-for-profit co-ops. Tens of thousands of co-op leaders, employees, and members across the country rallied to advocate passage of the bill.

Edgecombe-Martin County EMC relies on FEMA funding to help reimburse for damage caused to our electric system after a natural disaster. We have benefited from FEMA disaster recovery funding on several occasions after hurricanes caused severe flooding and wind damage to our electrical system. Without FEMA reimbursement funding and the ability to treat it as non-taxable revenue, we could jeopardize the ability to protect our members from unfair increases in their electric rates. We also utilize REDL&G (Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant) funding to provide zero-interest loans to new and existing businesses to help promote smart growth in our rural part of the state.

The other relevant provision included in the funding bill that received bipartisan approval was the SECURE Act. NRECA has been advocating reform of the pension issue for several years, and nearly 2,000 co-op leaders lobbied Congress on the issue earlier this year as part of



NRECA's Legislative Conference. Electric cooperatives across the country stand to save more than \$30 million a year in pension insurance that has historically been paid into the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation. The SECURE Act adjusts the formula that determines what individual co-ops and other not-for-profit organizations must pay to the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corp. The decrease in premiums for cooperatives that participate in the NRECA Retirement Security Plan reflects the low risk that they will default on their pension payments. Congress recognized this and worked to pass the SECURE Act so we can continue to attract and retain quality employees.

Repeal of the so-called Cadillac tax was another pivotal piece of legislation included in the year-end spending bill. It was imposed in 2010 by the Affordable Care Act (ACA) on health care benefits that co-ops and other employers provide for their workers. The Cadillac tax levied a 40 percent tax on some employer-sponsored health insurance plans to help fund the ACA.

We applaud Congress for working together to pass bipartisan legislation during a political climate that seems unproductive at times. These critical changes noted above will save millions of dollars for electric cooperatives across the country for years to come.

Cooperatively,

Winston Howell
Winston Howell

Discontinuance of Past Due Door Notices

As of April 1, 2020, Edgecombe-Martin County EMC will no longer leave door hangers as a way to notify members that their electricity will be disconnected for non-payment. Instead, they'll be notified by an automated text message or email. Please make sure your phone number and email address are up-to-date by calling 1-800-445-6486.

Members will continue to get a final notice in the mail with a disconnect date. In the event you are unable to pay the bill, you may

contact the cooperative's office prior to the disconnection date to discuss possible payment arrangements. Edgecombe-Martin County EMC allows two payment arrangements within a 12-month period. If accounts are not brought current by that date, the member is subject to be disconnected for non-payment with no further notice.

Edgecombe-Martin County EMC has a number of easy and convenient ways for you to pay whether you want to pay online,



like to call in, need to drop it in the mail or want to stop by our office and say hello.



Meter Deployment Schedule

The ENERCO contractors will be in uniform and their company vehicles display the company logo and Edgecombe-Martin County EMC contractors logo.

When they arrive at your home, the installers will knock at the door to let you know they are there to replace your meter. The installers will not need to enter your home, nor will they request any personal information from you for the meter replacement.

During the process, your power will be out for just a few minutes.

When the installation is complete, the contractor will leave a door hanger at your location to let you know your meter has been replaced.

During the first Quarter of 2020, Edgecombe-Martin County EMC will change out meters in J. C. Hall, Davistown-Mercer, Kingsboro, Rocky Mount and Mayo-Dunbar substations. This will affect members on the west side of our system in the rural areas surrounding Crisp, Macclesfield, Pinetops, Davistown, Lancaster, Kingsboro, Penelo, Leggett, and Wrendale.

Along The LINE

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