



Along the LINE

MAY 2021

For members of
Edgecombe-Martin County EMC



2021 Annual Meeting

Thank you to our members who attended the 84th Annual Meeting on Thursday, March 25

In order to protect the health of our members and our staff, the event was held as a drive-in meeting with attending members staying in their vehicles to register, vote, and collect their registration gifts. The business meeting was broadcast via FM radio and on Facebook Live.

Registered members were entered in a drawing for 10 – \$100 bill credits with the drawing held on Friday, March 26.

While the event was different from

our traditional annual meeting, it was great to see so many Edgecombe-Martin County EMC members in attendance.

We aren't exactly sure what next year's meeting will look like, but it's nice to know that we can count on our members in these uncertain times. Thank you to our awesome members for your involvement, and your continued support throughout what has turned out to be a challenging year!



Holiday Closing

Edgecombe-Martin County EMC will be closed on Monday, May 31, in observance of Memorial Day.

Payments after office hours and on holidays can be made at the kiosk under the drive thru canopy, by calling our automated telephone service at 1-855-356-6358, placed in the night deposit box or you may choose to utilize the convenience of online bill-pay by logging on to ememc.com.

To report an emergency after hours, please call 1-800-690-0657.

May is Electrical Safety Month

As your local energy partner, and in honor of National Electrical Safety Month in May, Edgecombe-Martin County EMC is encouraging members to take time this month to talk to your family about safe electricity practices. You can start by sharing these simple tips:

Inside:

- Never put anything other than an electrical plug in an outlet.
- Examine electrical cords often for fraying or cracking, and throw away any worn cords.
- Extension cords are for temporary use. They are not intended for use as permanent home wiring.
- Don't run cords under carpets or rugs.
- Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) outlets should be used in any area where water and electricity could mix—including kitchens, bathrooms, garages and outdoors—and should be tested monthly.
- Never touch electrical appliances with wet hands or use them near sinks, tubs, toilets or showers.
- Don't use extension cords or multi-outlet converters for appliances. All major appliances should be plugged directly into a wall outlet.

Outside:

- Never go near or drive over a power line. If you encounter a downed line, stay far away and notify Edgecombe-Martin County EMC.



- Keep kites, model airplanes and metallic balloons away from powerlines.
- Watch for overhead lines with using a ladder, working on a roof or carrying a long tool.
- Call 811 before any digging project.
- If it is necessary to use a portable generator, always operate the generator outdoors in an open area. Use an extension cord to connect the generator directly to the appliance, and ensure the extension cord has three-prongs and is rated for the amount of power used by the appliance. Do not connect generators directly to household wiring unless the work is completed by a licensed electrician. This prevents backfeeding, which could electrocute utility workers.

Noel Lee Jr. Memorial Scholarship

Last chance to apply for the 2021 Noel Lee, Jr. Memorial Scholarship. The Noel Lee, Jr. Memorial Scholarships are offered to members of Edgecombe-Martin County EMC who plan to complete a one or two-year vocational/technical/community college program of study.

The technical school or community college must be accredited in North Carolina. These scholarships give prospective students the opportunity to further their education so they can acquire new skills and knowledge to better prepare them for their future careers.

Applications will be accepted now through May 11, 2021. You can access, complete, and submit applications online at ememc.com. If you wish to receive an application form by mail, please call Monica Speight at (252) 641-9502.

The Noel Lee, Jr. Memorial Scholarships are made possible through the dedicated work of the Volunteer Action Committee of Edgecombe-Martin County EMC and other private donations.





Last year's Atlantic hurricane season broke records with a total of 30 named storms, 12 of which made landfall in the United States, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The severity of the storm season made headlines and garnered significant attention until the tropics settled, the weather cooled and new issues dominated headlines.

But at Edgecombe-Martin County EMC, we did not forget. Our focus on improving the resilience of the electric grid is a year-round effort. We take steps continually to ensure the electric grid can quickly and effectively recover from storms and other threats so our members have the reliable, affordable and sustainable electricity they depend on.

The electric grid has evolved substantially in recent years and will continue to change as new advancements are transforming the ways co-ops and other utilities transmit power and our members use it. Digital technology is also making an unprecedented level of energy monitoring and communication possible, which ultimately benefits you by alerting us to issues on the grid and enabling tools that allow you to be more aware of your energy use.

On today's modern grid, power no longer moves in a linear path from cooperative to member. Instead it includes a wide variety of resources and technologies spread throughout the grid, like a spider web. Many of these distributed energy resources stem directly from members like you, including smart thermostats and water heater controls, residential solar, and even electric vehicles. Edgecombe-Martin County EMC is taking steps to make it more convenient than ever to drive an electric vehicle. We are partnering with other electric cooperatives across North Carolina to build an electric vehicle charging network that allows EV drivers to easily travel throughout our state and visit co-op communities. Our cooperative also offers special rebates and rates to EV drivers. If you're considering driving electric, please contact us at 252-823-2171 for more information or visit ncdriveelectric.com. Edgecombe-Martin County EMC and the state's other electric cooperatives are also pursuing a range of innovative energy solutions, from microgrids to solar and storage, that further contribute to enhanced grid flexibility and efficiency.

Using a sophisticated energy management platform, we are carefully coordinating and dispatching these interconnected resources to meet electricity demand and balance traffic on the grid, which improves reliability and helps manage costs by offsetting the need to build traditional power plants.

We are also undertaking other measures that increase grid resilience and strengthen our infrastructure against storms, including physical enhancements and the introduction of system redundancies that help prevent outages from occurring. Edgecombe-Martin County EMC uses various techniques for actively managing our right-of-ways. Our right-of-ways are managed on a three-year rotation, so we can continually address vegetation growth across our entire distribution and transmission systems. A large part of our distribution system right-of-way is cut using bucket trucks and personnel that are trained in cutting around power lines. You may see some tall equipment being used for trimming as well, which is called sky trimming. This equipment allows the tree trimmers to work in the most difficult terrain where only climbing crews could go before. Another method we use to manage our right-of-ways is the spraying of herbicides. Contract crews that are licensed and experienced will spray areas to help reduce the need for cutting and mowing right-of-ways in specific areas.

All of these efforts are part of our ongoing commitment to building a brighter future for the people, businesses and communities we serve. To learn more about the electric grid and how we prepare for and respond to storms, visit ememc.com.

Cooperatively,

Winston Howell

Winston Howell

Prepare Now for Hurricane Season

May 9-15 is Hurricane Preparedness Week in North Carolina.

Edgecombe-Martin County EMC is joining the National Weather Service and state officials in encouraging all North Carolinians to prepare now for storms, in advance of the start of Atlantic Hurricane Season on June 1. Here are simple steps to get ready and stay safe this storm season:

- Outline a communication and evacuation plan for your family. If you have pets or any livestock, include them in your plan.
- Create an emergency kit that includes:
 - o Important documents sealed in a watertight plastic bag
 - o Cash
 - o Enough non-perishable food, water and medication for at least three days
 - o First-aid kit
 - o Battery-powered radio
 - o Flashlight
 - o Extra batteries
 - o Personal hygiene items
 - o Extra clothes and blankets
 - o Food and other supplies for pets
- Bookmark our live outage map at <http://74.122.17.102/> to see a real-time look at power outages across our service territory.
- Sign up for local weather alerts. You can also visit ReadyNC.org for tips on preparing for natural disasters, as well as real-time weather and traffic information.

This year, it is also important to stay tuned to the latest health and safety guidelines from the CDC and local officials, and to adjust your preparedness plans accordingly to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.

HVAC Service Reminder

The air conditioner is always the hardest working appliance during the summer months. For day-to-day comfort, we rely on our cooling system, be it at home or at the office. For that reason, it's imperative to have your HVAC system serviced before it starts getting too warm and humid.

Most members can expect to see their bills increase during the summer months as their air conditioners run longer and harder to cool the home to their desired temperature. Experts recommend that you keep your thermostat set at 78 degrees when your HVAC system is set to cool in order to keep energy consumption as low as possible.

You should also inspect and replace your return filters monthly if needed. Failing to change your air filters can cause your air conditioner to run longer and become less efficient. An efficient air conditioner means more money in your pocket due to lower electric bills.



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