

Along the LINE

September 2021

For members of
Edgecombe-Martin County EMC

2nd Annual Line Technician Camp

Edgecombe-Martin County EMC will host our 2nd annual Line Technician Academy the week of October 11-15.

Edgecombe-Martin County EMC Line Technician Academy provides high school students with a look at a career in electric utility line work. Students gain insight into the working conditions, education/training requirements, career outlook and compensation of an electric line technician. The academy will be held one day for each school from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m., depending on participation. Lunch will be provided.

This academy is open to any student in grades 9 through 12 interested in learning more about careers in the line technician field. Home school students are welcome. This academy is provided at no cost by Edgecombe-Martin County EMC. Schools and/or students are responsible for transportation.

Our vision is to ensure that Edgecombe-Martin County EMC is poised to bring the benefits of a well-prepared workforce to our region by focusing on career fields where there are current and projected shortages of qualified workers.

There will be hands on sessions that will include: what is a cooperative, careers available, power outages, safety tools, bucket rescue, pole



top rescue, education, high voltage demonstration, field work, and meter testing.

A representative from Nash and Martin Community College will be attending during the week to discuss their linemen degree program. Eligible 2021 North Carolina high school graduates will have their tuition and fees covered at a community college for up to two years. More information will be provided during the academy.

Holiday closing

Edgecombe-Martin County EMC will be closed on Monday, September 6, in observance of Labor Day.



Strickland Named the 2020 Safety Employee of the Year

Georgia Strickland received the 2020 Safety Employee of The Year Award at the July board meeting.

At Edgecombe-Martin County EMC, keeping our employees safe is our top priority. Edgecombe-Martin County EMC has built a culture of safety through active awareness programs and consistent, hands-on training for all employees. The Cooperative strives to be an industry leader in all aspects of safety.

Georgia Strickland received the 2020 Safety Employee of The Year Award at the July board meeting. Safety Service Awards recognizing five-year benchmarks were also awarded to

the following employees: Paula Klutz (5 years), Ethan Thomas (5 years), Will Scott (10 years), Bobby Wheeler (20 years), Steve Lewis (25 years), Thomas Millwood (25 years), Mike Johnson (30 years), Lisa Tolson (30 years), Nina Draughn (35 years) and Georgia Strickland (45 years).



September Marks Annual Celebration for Driving Electric

National Drive Electric Week kicks off Sept. 25, and Edgecombe-Martin County EMC is joining this nationwide celebration to highlight the many benefits of driving electric.

Electric vehicles (EVs) have a lot to offer our member-consumers, including increased convenience and cost savings, decreased maintenance and a better driving experience. They also provide community benefits, like helping the environment, strengthening the economy and supporting a more efficient electric grid.

Today's EVs offer near-instant torque, meaning fast acceleration and more response behind the wheel. There are sleek options to fit any driver, from sedans and trucks to SUVs and minivans. As for charge time, many vehicles can be up to 80 percent charged in less than 30 minutes and because they have fewer moving parts than gas-powered cars, they require less maintenance and no oil changes. Finally, they continue to become more affordable, especially when paired with rebates, tax-incentives and a low-interest loan available to cooperative members through the Electric Federal Cooperative Credit Union.



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 to the communities co-ops are proud to call home. This network includes the Level 3/DC Fast charging station we have installed at our office.

Our cooperative also offers special rebate and rates to EV drivers. If you are considering driving electric, please contact us at 252-823-2171.

You can learn more about the many benefits of driving electric, see information addressing common myths and misunderstandings of EVs and find financial incentives for driving electric at ncdriveelectric.com/Edgecombe-martin.

The cost of solar panels have continued to decrease over the past decade. While rooftop solar panels do offer an opportunity to make the transition to renewable energy an option, there are also some important issues that homeowners should take into consideration.

Solar generation is available only when the sun is shining, but it's our job to make sure you have reliable, dependable power 24 hours a day, seven days a week, rain or shine, day and night. That's why we must maintain an infrastructure (the "grid") to meet your energy needs and ensure an uninterrupted flow of energy, regardless of the weather.

Members looking to purchase and install residential solar arrays can often benefit from available tax incentives. There are federal tax incentives known as the investment tax credit (ITC), it allows you to deduct 26% of the cost of installing a solar energy system from your federal taxes. Even with the incentives, members are responsible for the system and all the up-front costs of installing a solar system (unless you lease), which can be significant. Installing solar not only involves a qualified contractor, but you must also follow electrical codes, safety codes, and have city or county permits.

Other factors to consider include your home's patterns of energy consumption and whether your roof can safely accommodate solar panels, and the direction your home faces. Before you even consider installing solar panels, ask yourself, how old is my roof? If you know that you will need a new roof soon, or that a part of your roof is damaged, it probably isn't the best idea to install solar panels. Another aspect to consider is the warranty on your roof compared to the warranty on the solar panels. If you have solar panels that will last for 20 years and a roof that will only last between 10 – 15, it increases the cost of maintenance. Try to match both projects in terms of how long they will last in order to reduce the amount of effort, time and money you will need to invest. Always remember, even with the installation of solar panels at your home, you'll still be connected to our electrical grid to power your home when panels don't generate sufficient electricity.

Despite the fact that the cost of solar panels have

decreased, a full-sized solar array for a household residence is still considerably high. Currently, the average price of an installed residential solar system is between \$2.25 and \$3.05 per watt, depending on where you live and the type of roof that is covering your home. The average energy consumption annually in a residential home in our service area is 16,776 kWh. A home that is seeking to supply at least 75 percent of their energy from solar panels would need a 7.9 kW solar system for a total cost of around \$18,000 to \$24,000.

The cost of electricity varies by utility, but as an example, on our system as a residential member you pay 0.1222 per \$/kWh. If you had a 7.9 kW system that produced 12,399 kWh annually, your rooftop solar system would be generating a savings of around \$107 per month in electricity costs. This means that it would take at least 16 years to completely pay off the investment of installing a rooftop solar system assuming your electric rate didn't change over that time period.

If you are looking to save money in the short-term, you may want to consider other options before solar. Maximizing the energy-efficiency of your home through insulation, sealing air leaks and other basic fix-it projects may make more sense. However, if you are more comfortable with a longer-term return on your investment, ranging on average from 14 to 19 years, solar may make sense for your situation.

Whether you are considering investing in solar or other energy-efficiency upgrades, make the decision that best fits your budget and expectations. No matter your energy needs, we are here to help you make choices that are right for you.

If you are considering rooftop solar at your home, you can visit ememc.com to view our policies, procedures and application for interconnecting your rooftop solar or other distributed generation project to the distribution system. Your installer or electrical contractor is required to contact Edgecombe-Martin County EMC in advance of installation to ensure proper interconnection design and authorization.

Cooperatively Yours,

Mike Johnson

Mike Johnson

Educators, the Bright Ideas Application Deadline is Approaching - Apply Now!

K-12 educators, the 2021 Bright Ideas education grant program application deadline is almost here!

To apply for project funding for the 2021-22 academic school year, submit your application on or before September 15. This year, Edgecombe-Martin County EMC is awarding up to \$1,500 in grant funding to teachers with innovative, hands-on learning experiences that will enrich the lives of students.

To apply, teachers need to include a proposed

budget, outline a plan for implementation and evaluation, as well as have a stamp of approval from the school's principal. All applicants must meet eligibility requirements. For more information and to check your eligibility status, please contact Monica Speight at monicas@ememc.com or 252-641-9502.

To learn more about the program and apply online, visit ncbrightideas.com.

Stay Prepared During Peak Hurricane Season

Hurricane season is in its peak from mid-August to late October, and as North Carolinians

know too well, any part of our state can be impacted by a hurricane.

As the frequency and intensity of these storms increases, it's more important than ever for our members to make hurricane safety and preparedness a priority.

Edgecombe-Martin County EMC is prepared to respond if severe weather causes power outages and encourages you to prepare by taking simple steps, including:

- Outline a communications and evacuation plan for your family before a hurricane or storm warning is issued to minimize confusion and fear. If you have pets or livestock, include them in your plan.
- Create an emergency kit that includes: Important documents sealed in a watertight plastic bag, cash, three days' worth of non-perishable food, water and medication, first-aid kit, battery-powered radio, flashlight, extra batteries, personal hygiene items, extra clothes and blankets, food and other supplies for pets,
- Sign up for local weather alerts and warnings.
- Follow Edgecombe-Martin County EMC on Facebook to stay informed about weather, outages and other information.
- Bookmark our live online outage map to find real-time outage information: bit.ly/EMEMCoutage



Along The LINE

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