

A publication for members of Edgecombe-Martin County EMC

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



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Pole Inspection Process Continues

ALONG THE LINE

Southside Utility Maintenance, Inc. was recently awarded the contract to complete pole inspections across the Cooperative's system. As part of the inspection process, their representatives will be inspecting a percentage of various types of poles to ensure they are structurally sound. Poles will also be treated to help stop decay and damage caused by wood destroying insects.

Pole inspection and preventative pole maintenance saves your Cooperative money by reducing the unnecessary replacement of poles damaged due to the early signs of decay. Preventative pole maintenance has been an ongoing program at your Cooperative for many years, and it is a safe and harmless process.

Southside Utility Maintenance will begin the inspection process out of the Shiloh Farm Rd. Substation in the Tarboro area. They will then move to other areas on our system to continue the inspection process. The inspection process will take a few months to complete and contractors may have to access your property to inspect and treat poles. They will attempt to notify you of their presence if they will be working in your yard. Their trucks will display their logo and a logo that identifies them as a contractor working for the Cooperative.



Southside Utility Maintenance will be performing pole inspections across our system to identify poles that need replacing or treating.

Call Before You Dig

North Carolina 811
www.nc811.org

Do you have a digging project in your near future? If so, please call **811** and speak with a representative to schedule a locate for underground facilities. You can also contact Edgecombe-Martin County EMC to locate our underground electric lines by calling **(252)823-2171**. It is a good idea to mark where you plan to dig with white paint or flags so the utility locators know the exact area of your excavation.

Touchstone Energy Sports Camp for Middle School Students

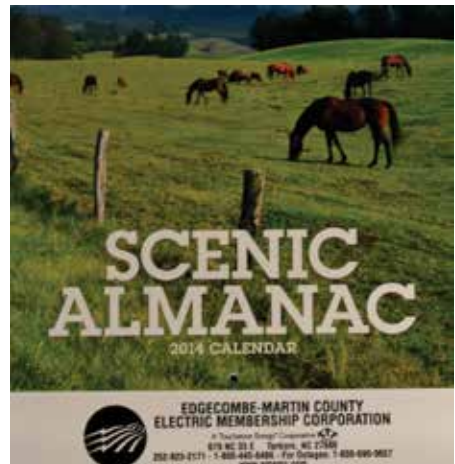
Edgecombe-Martin County EMC is accepting applications from middle-school students for all-expense-paid scholarships to summer basketball camps at the University of North Carolina and N.C. State University. Young men can apply to attend the Roy Williams Carolina Basketball Camp in Chapel Hill, and young women can vie for a spot at the Wolfpack Women's Basketball Camp in Raleigh.

Students can download an application at www.ncelectriccooperatives.com beginning Jan. 2, 2015. Edgecombe-Martin County EMC will select one student for each camp in a competitive process based on academics, extra-curricular activities and a short essay. Rising sixth through eighth graders are eligible to apply, and the final application deadline is March 31.

The Touchstone Energy Sports Camp Scholarship program, sponsored by Edgecombe-Martin County EMC and the state's 26 electric cooperatives, sends more than 50 students statewide to learn from renowned collegiate coaches and athletes each year. Both

camps will work closely with students to develop fundamental skills that will help the young athletes excel both on and off the court.

The Touchstone Energy Sports Camps program provides a unique educational and athletic opportunity for outstanding students across our state and is yet another way the cooperatives are demonstrating their commitment to North Carolina communities.



STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

Edgecombe-Martin County Electric Membership Corporation is the recipient of Federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The USDA prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call toll free (866) 632-9992 (voice) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (relay voice users). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Members of Edgecombe-Martin County EMC can request a complimentary 2015 Scenic Almanac calendar or a 2015 Farmer's Almanac on their next visit to our office. We will distribute the calendars and almanacs to walk-in members until they are gone, so stop by and get yours today.

Both the calendar and almanac provide an abundance of useful information to help you make plans throughout the year!

HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

Edgecombe-Martin County EMC will be closed on Thursday, January 1, for New Year's Day.

Payments after office hours and on holidays can be made at the kiosk under the drive thru canopy, placed in the night deposit box, online at www.ememc.com or by calling 1-855-356-6358.

To report a loss of power or an emergency after hours, please call 1-800-690-0657.

Your Support is Important

Thank You for Contacting the EPA

Thank you for caring enough about your fellow cooperative members that you were willing to contact the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to tell them to consider revising their proposed rules on existing power plants. We believe, and you helped deliver that message with vigor, that a cleaner environment is important, but that the proposal in its current state will place an undue burden on members.

You and more than 1.1 million Americans took the time to submit comments to EPA, and you will make a difference as the agency works on finalizing the rule.

Edgecombe-Martin County EMC provides affordable, reliable power to nearly 12,000 member-owners at the lowest possible cost. We, along with the other 25 cooperatives in the state, also serve rural communities that have serious economic challenges. The rules, as currently written, will have a disproportionate impact in rural America, and place additional burdens on people who can least afford them.

Our promise is to continue to work with the EPA to develop a proposal that balances the environment and the economy and that gives credit to our state's cooperatives for their work with renewable energy and energy efficiency. The state's electric cooperatives were early adopters of renewable energy and energy efficiency, and these efforts have allowed the co-ops to meet the state-approved renewable portfolio standard put in place

in 2007. We will encourage the EPA to appropriately acknowledge these efforts, as well as fully recognize the investment North Carolina's electric cooperatives have made in nuclear energy; more than half of the cooperatives' power portfolio comes from emissions-free nuclear energy.

The message is quite simple: "Please consider rules that balance the environment and economic realities while giving credit to those who were ahead of the curve with the adoption of emissions-free technologies, including nuclear energy, renewable energy and energy efficiency."

Your co-op is looking out for you, and one of the ways we're doing that is by advocating for you on energy issues. I thank you for joining us in that effort.

For ideas to help save energy and money now, visit www.TogetherWeSave.com or download the free app.

Cooperatively Yours,

Winston Howell

Winston Howell



Electrical Fires Increase During Winter

Over the past several months, our line crews have responded to an increased number of house fires to disconnect the electrical service. It is always hard to respond to a fire where someone may have lost all of their worldly possessions or even their life.

According to the U.S. Fire Administration, there are approximately 28,600 home electrical fires each year. Winter months are the most dangerous for electrical fires because indoor activities require additional lighting, heating and appliance use.

Most electrical fires are the result of faulty outlets and old electrical systems, but cords, plugs, receptacles, switches, light fixtures and bulbs are also likely causes. The bedroom is the leading area for electrical fire origin. Extreme care should be used when using any type of space heater in your home. Space heaters should be moved away from curtains and other items that could catch on fire.

If an electrical fire does occur in your home, remember to NEVER use water to put it out. By the time you see smoke coming out of the outlet, a fire has most likely already begun and is spreading within the walls and up to the attic. Always have a class ABC fire extinguisher, which uses dry chemicals to put out fires, ready for this type of situation.

If it is safe to do so, turn off all power in the house, exit and call 911. Be sure to tell them it is an electrical fire. After having an electrical fire, call a certified electrician to determine what needs to be replaced or what you can do to avoid another occurrence.

Prepare Early for Inclement Winter Weather

Did you know? – Monthly average temperatures in North Carolina are the lowest in January, resulting in the increased chance of snow, sleet, freezing rain or a wintry mix, according to the State Climate Office of North Carolina. Our state saw its fair share of winter storms in 2014, so let's all take the time now to reacquaint ourselves with winter safety tips.

Safety Precautions Before A Storm Hits

- Create an “emergency supply kit” full of essentials like blankets, flashlights, batteries, food and first aid items.
- Fill up your car with gas. Since gas stations often rely on electricity to power their pumps, a power outage may leave you stranded and without gas.
- We work with arborists to employ a right-of-way program that keeps tree limbs clear from power lines to ensure system reliability. However, if you see limbs near power lines close to your home, please call our office so we can address the issue. Do not try to trim trees near power lines yourself.

Driving Safety

- If possible, avoid driving during winter storms. If you absolutely have to drive, be sure to clear your windows and mirrors before getting on the road.
- Reduce your speed and maintain a safe following distance behind other vehicles because snow and ice may cause skidding.
- Do not apply the brakes if you begin to slide. Instead, take your foot off of the gas and turn the steering wheel in the direction of the slide.
- If traffic lights are out, treat the intersection like a four-way stop.
- Use extreme caution when crossing bridges and overpasses as they accumulate ice before other parts of the road.

Protecting Your Home During Winter Weather

- Prevent your pipes from freezing by turning your faucets on just enough so they can drip.
- If using a space heater or heat lamp, be sure to place it on a solid surface at least three feet away from anything combustible. Always turn off space heaters before leaving the room or going to sleep.
- Never leave a fireplace unless its embers are completely extinguished. Also consider using a glass or metal fire screen to catch sparks and rolling logs, and never store flammable liquids near sources of heat.
- Know how to use your generator. Generators should be placed in an open and ventilated area. They should never be operated inside a home—including spaces like the basement and garage—due to the danger of inhaling carbon monoxide fumes.

Let's hope for an easy winter with no severe weather and power outages, but you just never know. Stay safe, plan now.

ALONG THE LINE

www.ememc.com

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