

The LAMPLIGHTER

Official Member Newsletter of Washington EMC

March 2025

Serving members in Baldwin, Emanuel, Glascock, Hancock, Jefferson, Johnson, Laurens, Warren, Washington and Wilkinson counties

Be ready for storm season

Preparedness is the best defense

Spring is on our doorstep, and like many of you I'm looking forward to more opportunities to be outdoors and enjoy warmer weather. Springtime brings many of my favorite activities, such as cooking out with family and friends, working in the garden and simply slowing down a bit to enjoy life.

Unfortunately, spring and summer can also create perfect conditions for severe storms.

Washington EMC crews are always prepared and standing by to respond should power outages occur in our area. When severe storms cause power disruptions, our line crews take all necessary precautions before they get to work on any downed lines.

I would encourage you to also practice safety and preparedness to protect your family during storms and outages.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency recommends the items below as a starting point for storm and disaster preparedness, but you

can also visit www.ready.gov for additional resources:

- Stock your pantry with a three-day supply of nonperishable food, including canned goods, energy bars, peanut butter, powdered milk, instant coffee, water and other essentials (e.g., diapers and toiletries).
- Confirm you have adequate sanitation and hygiene supplies, including towelettes, soap and hand sanitizer.
- Ensure your first-aid kit is stocked with pain relievers, bandages and other medical essentials, and make sure your prescriptions are current.
- Set aside basic household items you will need, including flashlights, batteries, a manual can opener and portable, battery-powered radio or TV.
- Organize emergency supplies so they are easily accessible in one location.

In the event of a prolonged power outage, turn off major appliances, TVs, computers and other sensitive electronics. This will help avert damage from potential power surges, as well as help prevent overloading circuits during power restoration. That



Wendy Sellers
President/CEO

said, leave one light on so you will know when power is restored.

If you plan to use a portable generator, make sure it's rated to handle the amount of power you will need, and always review the manufacturer's instructions to operate it safely. Also, be sure to set up and run your generator in a well-ventilated area outside the home.

Listen to local news or a NOAA Weather Radio for storm and emergency information, and check, like and follow Washington EMC's Facebook page for updates. Other great sources include the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency's website and Facebook page, as well as online pages for your local county emergency management and homeland security office and law

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An electric membership corporation

258 N. Harris St. • P.O. Box 598
Sandersville, GA 31082

Email: wemc@washingtonemc.com
Website: www.washingtonemc.com
Wendy Sellers, President/CEO

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OFFICE HOURS

8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Monday through Friday

PHONES

Local (478) 552-2577
Long distance (800) 552-2577

24-HOUR CALL CENTER

To report a power interruption
please call:
Local (478) 552-2577
Long distance (800) 552-2577

BRANCH LOCATIONS

12860 Broad St.
Sparta, GA 31087
Closed on Thursday

100 W. College St.
Wrightsville, GA 31096
Closed on Wednesday

Convenient bill pay options include:

Drive-thru payment window

319 N. Smith St., Sandersville, GA 31082
Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Pay your bill online

www.washingtonemc.com

Use the free Washington EMC mobile app

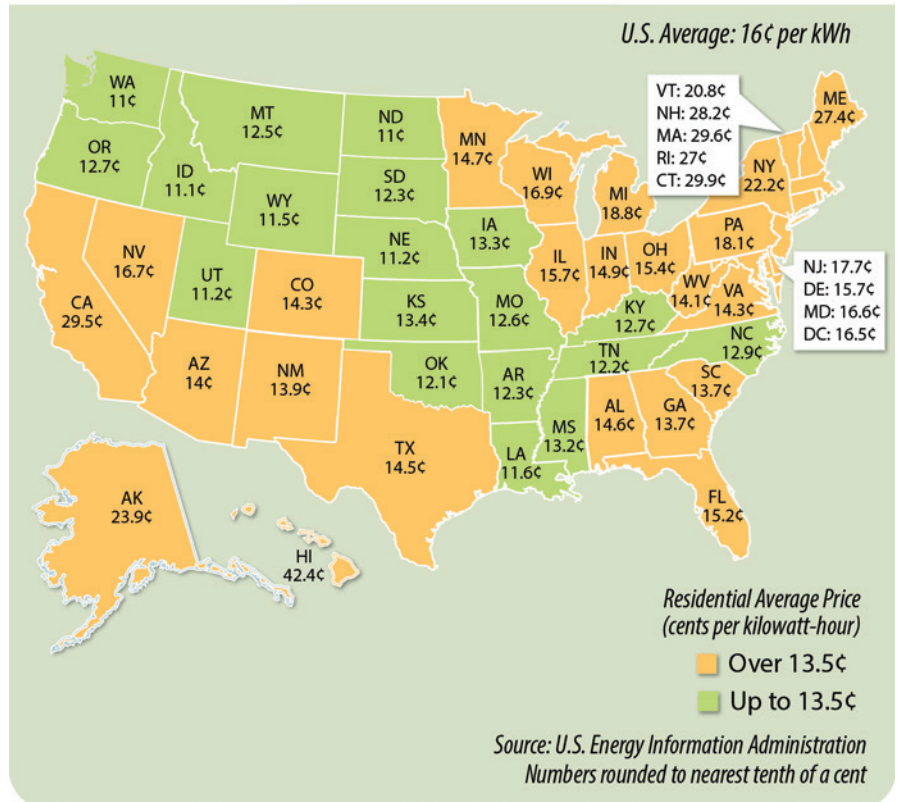
Look for WEMC in the
App Store or Android Market.

Pay by phone

(478) 552-2577 or (800) 552-2577

Average Prices for Residential Electricity

2023 figures, in cents per kWh



ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

March is an ideal time to service your home cooling system, ensuring it runs efficiently when the heat of summer arrives. Routine maintenance like cleaning or replacing filters, checking refrigerant levels and inspecting parts can improve your system's energy efficiency and lower your energy bills. By addressing potential issues early, you can avoid costly emergency repairs and extend the lifespan of your unit. Scheduling service in the spring helps you beat the peak season rush, giving you faster access to qualified technicians. A well-maintained cooling system can save energy and keep your home comfortable all summer long.



Springtime brings out scammers

Springtime is coming, and so are the scammers.

Their timing is as reliable as the birds, flowers and buds on the trees in your yard. But that's the only thing that's reliable about the crooks who pose as electric cooperative employees and call or visit you to ask for money.

Impersonators will ask you for everything, from making good on a supposedly overdue bill to paying upfront and replacing your electric meter. They might tell you about a fantastic new program designed to save you energy and ask you for your personal information to sign up—including your bank account or credit card number.

Don't fall for it! Here's what to be on the lookout for:

- Someone who calls on the phone might convince you that you've overpaid your electric bill and ask for your bank account or credit card number for a refund. Think before you agree. If you usually pay your bill with a credit card or check, the utility already has that information and doesn't need to ask for it.
- A scammer who shows up at your home claiming to be a utility worker might offer to do a free energy audit, then either ask for

TIPS TO AVOID ENERGY SCAMS



Be cautious of fraudulent websites pretending to be an electric utility. Scammers often create look-alike sites to steal your personal or payment information. Always type your utility's official web address directly into your browser instead of clicking email or text links. Watch for signs of a secure website, such as "https://\" in the address bar and a padlock icon. If you're ever unsure, call your utility company using the official phone number listed on your bill to verify payment or account details. Stay vigilant to protect yourself from utility fraud.



- your credit card number to pay for an additional service or convince you to let him come inside your house, where they can rip you off.
- If you haven't requested a home visit from your electric cooperative—or if the utility hasn't notified you in advance that someone is coming—chances are good the

unscheduled visitor is a fraud.

- Never agree to pay by wire transfer, cryptocurrency, gift card or cash-reload card. Those are sure signs you're being scammed.
- If you believe someone is falsely representing themselves as an employee of your electric cooperative, send them on their way. Then, report the visit to your utility.

STAY IN THE KNOW



Stay connected by keeping your contact information up to date. Current contact information benefits you in multiple ways:

- ✓ Faster outage reporting and response.
- ✓ Timely alerts about planned outages and other important updates.
- ✓ Smoother customer service interactions.
- ✓ Improved access to member benefits and programs.

Ensure your phone number, email address and mailing address are up to date so you can enjoy the benefits of staying connected.

Be ready for storm season,

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enforcement offices.

Severe storms can occasionally bring down power lines. If you see a downed line, always assume it's energized and never approach it. If flooding occurs, never walk through areas where power lines could be submerged.

Advance planning for severe storms or other emergencies can reduce stress and anxiety caused by a weather event and lessen the impact of a storm's effects.

Sign up for NOAA emergency alerts and warnings, and follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/WashingtonEMC/ for the latest updates. If you experience an outage, please don't report it on Facebook. Call our outage reporting number at (800) 552-2577. This is the fastest way to let us know if your power is out.

I hope we don't experience severe storms over the spring and summer months this year, but we can never predict Mother Nature's plans. At Washington EMC, we recommend that you make a plan today—because storm preparedness is always our best defense.

FAST. RELIABLE. FIBER INTERNET.

Conexon Connect's fiber-fast internet is available to all members of Washington EMC. Sign up today!

Your neighbors have made the switch. *Have you?*

Sign up today at
www.conexonconnect.com,
call us at (844) 542-6663
or scan our QR Code.



SCAN ME



HAPPY EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION DAY

Congratulations. Thank you for all of your hard work and dedication to this co-op. You are the reason we succeed!

THANK YOU!