

PROTECT YOUR LINEMEN



Keep objects off electric cooperative poles

Sumter EMC's linemen are well-trained and very dedicated men, who take tremendous pride in serving you. You can help protect your linemen by not turning our utility poles into obstacle courses with tacks, nails and staples from posted signs, posters, notices, or mounted recreational equipment.

Tacks, nails, and staples driven into Sumter EMC's utility poles can puncture the linemen's rubber safety gloves and leave them vulnerable to electrocution. Linemen whose climbing hooks hit a nail instead of sinking securely into wood may fall from the pole and sustain serious injuries. Remember, when a lineman must unfasten his safety harness to

climb above an obstacle on a utility pole, he's working without a net!

Also, when linemen have to remove objects from poles in order to climb them during an outage, it takes longer to restore your power.

Sumter EMC's linemen climb the poles in all weather conditions and at all hours of the day or night to maintain and repair the equipment that brings you safe, reliable electric power. These dedicated men face enough danger in their efforts to keep your electric power on -- please help eliminate additional hazards by not posting signs, posters, and notices or mounting recreational equipment on our utility poles.

BEWARE OF BILL SCAMS!

There is an online bill pay website that appears to be affiliated with local electric cooperatives, but it is NOT. Doxo.com is a third-party website that allows people to pay their electric bills via their website...at a price. What you don't know is that Doxo may charge you extra fees to make those payments.

By using this service, it could result in a late payment or even disconnection due to non-payment. Avoid this and use one of our payment methods to be sure you are paying directly to Sumter EMC:

1. Online Member Portal (<https://billing.sumteremc.com/oscp/>)
2. Free mobile app
3. Automated text system (1-800-342-6978, press 1)
4. Speak to a Customer Service Representative

By using one of our authorized payment options, you will not be charged an additional fee and you will have the security in knowing your payment is posted without delay.

If you receive a suspicious call or email from someone claiming to be a Sumter EMC representative and is requesting payment, please call us at 1(800) 342-6978.



Sumter EMC Announces Exit of Appliance Business

Sumter EMC opened its Appliance Sales and Service Center in 1998 and has operated successfully for 20 years and appreciates the support and patronage of the community since that time. Sumter EMC announces that as part of a regular review and evaluation of its business needs and priorities, the Sumter EMC Appliance Sales and Service business will be closing the first quarter of 2019 or when the existing inventory is gone.

Over the last several years, the appliance industry has evolved towards a model that is less supportive of a full-service appliance business. The trend has been towards products that contain more packaged electronic subsystems that, while more energy efficient and feature-rich, tend to increase repair costs relative to the cost of replacing the appliance. Global sourcing and manufacturing of components lowers the overall product cost but is yielding products that don't have the enduring life or serviceability of the products of yesteryear. The net result of these trends is

pressure to dispose of appliances rather than invest in repairs as was the normal tradition of the past. In addition, the options available for purchasing appliances, both local and online, have grown tremendously so that a broad selection of appliances from many different manufacturers is readily available to our local market.

As part of its evaluation, Sumter EMC has identified needs within its other core business functions that will require staffing, and employees of the Appliance Department will be able to transfer into other areas of the company to satisfy those needs. The need to exit the appliance business is a natural part of the evolution of any successful business to constantly evaluate needs and priorities and to allocate resources in a manner that serves its customers.

As a member-owned electric cooperative in business over 80 years, Sumter EMC is proud to continue the fine tradition of evolving to meet the needs of and provide outstanding service to its members.

Michael Manning retires after 41 years of service

Michael was born in Alma, Georgia, the only child of Jesse C. and Eunice Carter Manning, and grew up in Waycross. Before hiring on at Sumter EMC in May 1977, Michael spent 5 years working on an electric distribution contract crew for Pike Electric. Michael's quiet-spoken demeanor and unflappable steadiness quickly moved him from his initial position as a lineman to that of Service Representative, which he held for the remainder of his career at Sumter EMC.

From cut-ins, cut-outs, meter reading, changing security lights and surveying to taking trouble calls and working outages, Michael was dedicated to serving our members well. When reflecting on his years of work at Sumter EMC, Michael says, "I enjoyed most every minute of it – the friendships with my co-workers, the changing technology and equipment and just working with members. I like helping others, and it was pure joy to see a person's face light up when their power came back on."

Michael is married to the former Mary Marie McCarthy. They have one son, Jeffery Scott, and one grandson, Ethan Cole. Michael's plans for retirement include lots of travel and fishing, spending time with his family and just staying active. But, according to Michael, perhaps the best part of retirement is having the freedom to just do whatever he wants, whenever he wants and not having a strict schedule.

Sumter EMC is thankful for hard working employees like Michael who dedicate years to taking excellent care of the Sumter EMC members! Congratulations on your retirement, Michael!



Sumter EMC Members Attend Couples Co-op Conference



Sumter EMC recently sponsored Alan and Whitney Johnson (pictured above) to attend the Georgia Cooperative Council Couples Conference. This year's conference was held in Hiawassee, Georgia at the Ridges Resort and Marina on August 3-5. Couples from all across Georgia traveled to participate in the three-day event to learn more about the impact of cooperatives at the local, state and national level. They learned about the work and impact of financial, dairy and electric membership cooperatives in the state. Throughout the weekend, couples participated in short, educational sessions that were led by the GA Cooperative Development Center, Georgia EMC, Dairy Farmers of America, AgGeorgia Farm Credit and AgSouth Farm Credit.

Alan and Whitney, along with other attending couples, travelled to Young Harris to visit Blue Ridge Mountain EMC for a tour of the facilities to see how an EMC

operates. All of the conference activities and sessions are aimed at helping enhance the communication and leadership skills of the participants. The inviting environment helped foster dialogue between residents and local EMC leaders.

“Sumter EMC is proud to send couples to the conference each year. Our goal is to serve our members and we do this not only by providing them with affordable electricity, but also by providing them with opportunities to learn and engage with one another,” says Greg Crowder, VP of Marketing and Administration. “This is accomplished at the Co-op Council Couples Conference each year.”

The 2018 Cooperative Council Couples Conference was made possible by the support from electric cooperatives of Georgia, the Georgia Cooperative Council, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development and the Georgia Cooperative Development Center.



REBATES

are available on a
first-come, first-served
basis to replace a central
system electric or gas
furnace with an electric
heat pump.

Call Sumter EMC today
to see if you qualify!



Rebate program ends on December 31, 2018 or when the budget for the program is reached, whichever comes first. Sumter EMC must inspect your existing heating system before any new work is done and again once all upgrades are complete.

2019 Walter Harrison Scholarships



Sumter EMC is currently accepting applications for the prestigious Walter Harrison Scholarship. Created in 1985 by the board of directors of Georgia EMC, the scholarship pays tribute to the late Walter Harrison, a pioneer in the rural electricity movement

and a leader at local, state and national levels in the electric cooperative program.

In 2019, Walter Harrison Scholarships will be awarded to 11 students. The scholarship is merit based and is available to any college level student. A scholarship committee comprised of directors and managers of Georgia's EMCs will evaluate students on a number of criteria such as grade point average, SAT scores, academic standing, scholastic honors, community involvement and financial need. To apply for the scholarship, students must be accepted or enrolled at an accredited two- or four-year university or technical institute. They also must complete an application and submit a biographical sketch which includes a preview of his or her future plans. Finally, to be eligible for the scholarship,

students and their families must be members of Sumter EMC and reside within the co-op's service area.

"We know many families continue to face economic hardship and are concerned about how they will pay exorbitant college tuition, student activity fees, housing and book expenses that make it more and more difficult for students to afford a higher education and force families to explore a variety of alternatives to offset the costs of obtaining a degree," says Greg Crowder, Vice President of Marketing and Administration.

"Commitment to community is one of the cornerstones of the cooperative business model," continued Crowder, "and we think it's important to offer a hand up to deserving students in our service area."

Since 1987, Georgia's electric cooperatives have awarded over 200 scholarships totaling more than \$200,500 to deserving 213 students through the Walter Harrison Scholarship program.

Scholarship applications are available online at www.sumteremc.com or by calling Andrea Walker at (229) 924-8041 or (800) 342-6978. Scholarship applications must be submitted to Sumter EMC no later than January 15, 2019.

Harvest Safety Tips

- Keep all equipment at least 10 feet away from power lines.
- Never try to raise or move a power line to clear a path.
- Power line sagging? Don't move it. Call us immediately.

For more information on harvest safety, visit SafeElectricity.org



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Turn off kitchen, bath and other exhaust fans within 20 minutes after you're done cooking or bathing. When replacing exhaust fans, consider installing high-efficiency, low-noise models.

Source: energy.gov



IS PREPAY ELECTRIC SERVICE FOR YOU?

Take charge of your electric bills today with Sumter EMC's innovative Prepay Electric Service program for residential accounts.

No more late fees, no more disconnect fees or reconnect fees. Convenient payment options and daily notifications keep you updated with your account balance and daily energy usage. Call Sumter EMC today for details.