



Co-op Compassion: EMC Benevolent Project Volunteers Spread Community Cheer

Of the seven cooperative principles that guide our business model, “Concern for Community” seems to resonate most with Coweta-Fayette EMC employees during the holidays. To give back to a community that has given so much is an honor for our personnel, who once again joined together to make several local benevolent projects successful in December.

The EMC family has helped make many Christmas wishes come true in the cooperative service area over the years, and this season was no different. The project began before Thanksgiving, with the co-op’s Employee Benevolent Committee calling for non-perishable food, toiletries, clothing and monetary donations to benefit One Roof Ecumenical Alliance Outreach, a Coweta coalition of churches bringing spiritual/financial support to those in need; Bridging the Gap Community Outreach, a Newnan non-profit serving more than 1,000 people/month through food distribution; the Real Life Center, a Fayette organization offering a one-year program to help families get back on their feet; and the Fayette Samaritans, a ministry in Fayetteville providing food, clothing and financial assistance to individuals who may not qualify for aid from other agencies.

By mid-December, over 3,000 items had been counted, sorted, boxed and delivered by more than 20 EMC volunteers! In addition to donating canned goods and other items, the Benevolent Committee itself gave \$2,000 and was matched by the EMC for another \$2,000, making a grand

total of \$4,000 spread equally among the four organizations to help with Atlanta Food Bank purchases.

Individual goodie bags filled with fruit, candy and toiletries were also hand-delivered to assisted living facility residents at Ashley Glenn in Peachtree City and Wesley Woods in Newnan.

“This is something we can’t wait to dive into after Thanksgiving,” said project organizer Marsha McDaniel. “It makes such a huge impact on the recipients—and us.





The President's Message

*Chris Stephens
President and CEO*

Winter has arrived, or as I write this article, falling temperatures would seem to indicate its chilly return. El Niño has played an interesting role in our weather so far this season, producing warmer and wetter atmospheric conditions than normal. As with any winter, however, we always anticipate the potential for ice and snow. With a strong El Niño in place, we know this can increase the potential for intense, unpredictable climate patterns and storm systems.

In addition to our normal job duties, we continually monitor the weather to ensure we are ready if and when there is a severe situation. Each year, Coweta-Fayette EMC staff members participate in a tabletop exercise simulating the activation of our Emergency Response Plan. Not only is this a great training tool, but it allows us to update our strategy and implement new solutions to help become more efficient in responding to widespread outages. Should the need arise and our facilities become compromised, we even have a procedure for moving to an alternative location. During this drill, we evaluate the logistics of a disaster down to the smallest detail—everything from meals and lodging to mutual aid agreements with other utilities and line truck fuel is discussed, just to name a few topics.

Some great ideas have resulted from the tabletop exercise and some real-time crisis events have been managed, like Winter Storm Pax in 2014. Our out-

age management system predicts the device that has interrupted power to your residence or business by grouping the members affected based on the location of those who have reported a loss of electricity. In addition to the traditional method of calling in your outage via phone, whether you go through our automated system or an agent, we have also added that capability through our mobile app. With this smart phone tool, you can also see the areas of our service territory affected by power loss.

We have also enhanced our means of communication with members through an email notification system. Please contact our member service agents today to ensure we have your current email address. During widespread outages, we will send out digital notifications updating you on the status of the event. We will also share information on our Facebook and Twitter pages.

These are a couple of solutions we have implemented to help us provide better service to you. Our greatest tool is our greatest asset, however, and that is our Coweta-Fayette EMC employees. Continuous training, as well as double- and triple-checking that they are equipped with the tools they need to get the job done safely and efficiently, is one of my number one priorities. We have improved our communications with substation equipment, protection devices outside of the station and each meter to provide the information necessary for our employees to better understand the status of the system.

As we prepare for the months ahead, whether they hold ice, snow, tornadoes or other severe weather, our goal is to provide you with the service that you have come to expect from your EMC. Please look for our email updates and visit our website, Facebook and Twitter pages to get the latest news. Our greatest assets will be working hard to protect yours.

Attention Relyco Security Monitoring Customers!



In an effort to increase communication efficiencies, we recommend Relyco Security monitoring customers add **800-776-0465** to their cell phone preset or stored phone numbers as **“Alarm Monitoring.”** Georgia law mandates that our monitoring center verify all security alarms by attempting to contact a minimum of two phone numbers of the customer when an alarm is sent by the system.

By adding the **“Alarm Monitoring”** tag to the phone number referenced, you will know when our alarm monitoring center is calling and attempting to verify the alarm. This will help expedite assistance if it's necessary and also reduce the number of false alarms that are dispatched to the 911 agency, thereby saving valuable public resources.

Thank you for your assistance regarding this important item.



Security Resources



Staying Safe in a Strong El Niño Season

When temperatures drop and storms hit, it can be challenging to stay safe and warm. Storm severity varies depending on where you live, but nearly all Americans are affected by extreme winter weather at some point. In a year defined by one of the strongest El Niño patterns in almost two decades, Coweta-Fayette EMC cares about your safety, and we want you to be ready for whatever blows our way.

El Niño, a weather phenomenon characterized by unusually warm temperatures in the equatorial Pacific (not to be confused with La Niña, which is known for remarkable coolness), is a disruption of the ocean-atmosphere system having important consequences for global climate patterns.

Near the end of each year, ocean surface temperatures rise along the coasts of Ecuador and Peru. Locals referred to this warming as “El Niño,” meaning “The Child,” due to its appearance around Christmastime. Every two to seven years, a much stronger warming occurs, and over time, the term El Niño was adopted for it, too. Increased heating of the tropical atmosphere over the central/eastern Pacific affects circulation features, like the jet streams, causing storms and other systems to follow significantly altered paths and ultimately resulting in widespread persistent temperature and precipitation anomalies.

Since the fall – when the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA’s) Climate Prediction Center issued an outlook favoring a cooler, wetter winter for the South – to early January and a report from NASA declaring this year’s El Niño already possibly the worst ever recorded, we have continued to monitor the situation closely as each month saw high temperature records broken and unpredictable weather become commonplace. December was the warmest and wettest ever for the U.S., and the average 2015 temperature was the second-hottest since record-keeping began in 1895. NOAA reported 10 climatological disasters – a drought, two floods, five severe storms, a wildfire and a winter precipitation event – that resulted in 155 deaths and caused losses totaling more than \$1 billion each. Extreme weather occurred 70 percent more often than is normal... and scientists say we’re not out of the woods yet.

Stronger El Niños typically exhibit peak influence on North America’s weather during January and February, often stretching into March. In the South, temperatures are predicted to dip below normal, more heavy rain is forecast and EMC members should prepare for the possibility of severe winter storms. This could be a harsh season for Georgians, and the ripple effects from a strong El Niño are hard to predict.

Snow and ice can lead to downed power lines, leaving co-op members without electricity. With low temperatures, this can be dangerous. During an outage, our crews will work as quickly and as safely as possible to restore service, but there are a few things you can do to prepare:

- **Stay warm.** Plan to use a safe alternate heating source, like a fireplace/wood-burning stove. Exercise caution when operating, and never leave unattended. If using gasoline-, propane- or natural gas-burning devices, never run them indoors. Remember: fuel- and wood-burning heat sources should always be properly ventilated, and be sure to read the manufacturer’s directions before use.
- **Stay fed.** The CDC recommends having several days’ supply of food handy that doesn’t need to be cooked. Crackers, cereal, canned items and bread are good options. Five gallons of water per person should also be available in the event of an extended outage.
- **Stay safe.** When an outage occurs, it usually means power lines are down. It’s best not to travel, but if you must, bring a survival kit and companion. If you encounter downed lines, always assume they are live. Stay far away, and report the situation to us at 770-502-0226.

Winter weather can be unpredictable and dangerous, and planning ahead may mean the difference between life and death. Coweta-Fayette EMC is ready for what Mother Nature has in store, and we want you to be prepared, too. For more winter safety tips, visit www.ready.gov/winter-weather.

Could YOU be our next winning D.C.-bound delegate?

The Washington Youth Tour, scheduled for June 9-16, is a leadership opportunity and educational experience like no other. Sponsored by local electric cooperatives like Coweta-Fayette EMC, this trip is awarded to exceptional high school sophomores and juniors who compete for a chance to tour Washington, D.C. along with more than 100 other teens from across the state and more than 1,400 teens from across the country!

Highlights include visits to:

- Mt. Vernon
- Arlington National Cemetery
- Smithsonian Institution Museums

- Lincoln, FDR and Jefferson Memorials
- Holocaust Museum
- World War II, Korean and Vietnam Memorials

Entrants are required to write a 500-word essay from a choice of topics supplied by the EMC, and the deadline will be March 4. Students interested in learning leadership skills, developing life-long friendships and making a pilgrimage to our nation’s capital should contact Amy Lott by phone at 770-252-7446 or by email at alott@utility.org for more information and a kit of resource materials.



*Washington Youth Tour 2015 winners:
Min Lim and Shelby Worrell.*



Operation Round Up!

YOU Can Make A Difference.

Through Operation Round Up, more than \$200,000 per year goes to worthy groups and individuals in the EMC service area.

It is funded through voluntary contributions of EMC members whose monthly bills are “rounded up” to the nearest dollar. The extra change, which amounts to no more than \$11.88 per year, is tax-deductible and is donated to worthy causes and organizations in our very own communities. These donations make a tangible impact on thousands of individuals in our area.

Some recent recipients include: Coweta & Fayette County Fire Departments, American Union Relief Society, Exceptional OPS, Coweta 911, Camp Southern Ground, Boys and Girls Club, Family Patterns Matter, CASA, Bridging the Gap and Fayette Samaritans, in addition to college and vocational scholarships and Bright Ideas grants to teachers.

It's easy to give back! Sign up online at **utility.org** or by calling 770-502-0226.



Chris Stephens, President and CEO
C. Bradford Sears, Jr., Attorney
Douglas B. Warner, Attorney

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

James W. Fulton, III, Chairman
Therol Brown, Vice Chairman
J. Neal Shepard, Jr., Secretary-Treasurer
W. L. Clements
Ross Henry
Alice J. Mallory
K. M. Spaller
Elwood Thompson
Mildred A. Winkles

POWERlines

Editor: Mary Ann Bell
807 Collinsworth Road, Palmetto, GA 30268
(770) 502-0226

**Coweta-Fayette EMC is an equal opportunity
provider and employer/M/F/V/D.**



Coweta-Fayette

770-502-0226
www.utility.org

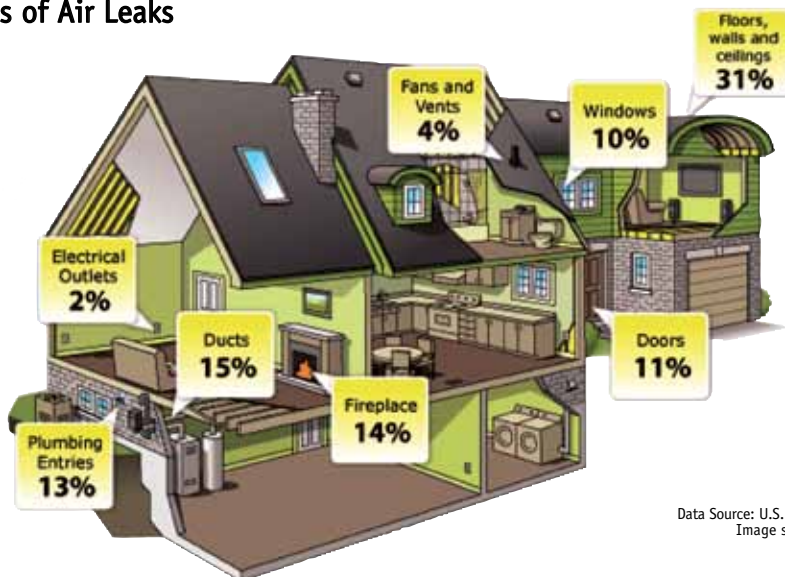
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Let Relyco Help Prepare Your Home for Winter

Freezing temperatures have arrived, along with higher energy bills and cold, drafty rooms. A Home Energy Assessment by Relyco uses the latest technologies to inspect all areas of your home for energy loss, and includes diagnostic testing to measure air leakage.

Major Sources of Air Leaks



Data Source: U.S. Department of Energy Savers
Image source: InsulationSmart.com

Relyco's Home Energy Assessment will provide a detailed analysis of cost-effective home improvements to lower energy bills and increase comfort, and may qualify for utility company rebates.

For more information, contact Relyco at 770-253-4053.

RELYCO
Energy Services