



## License Plate Pays Tribute to Linemen and Benefits Burn Patients and Families

Georgians can show additional support and appreciation for Coweta-Fayette EMC linemen and other utility line crews through the purchase of the state's first "Thank a Lineman" vehicle license plate.

Memories (some might say nightmares) from Tropical Storm Irma still linger for Georgians after Irma caused more than 1.5 million outages, including 550,000 for EMCs across the state. With some news sources reporting an estimated 16 million people without power due to Irma, this may become the single largest "blackout" by a weather event recorded in U.S. history and certainly the highest number and most geographically widespread electrical outage by a single weather event in Georgia.

The unprecedented event set in motion a massive power restoration effort involving more than 4,500 EMC linemen and support personnel from 18 other states from as far north as Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Michigan and Wisconsin, and as far west as Texas and Oklahoma.

For the vital work linemen perform in extraordinary circumstances such as Irma, and for their commitment every day, House Bill 260 was sponsored in the Georgia House of Representatives by Rep. Alan Powell (R-Hartwell) and carried in the Senate by Sen. Steve Gooch (R-Dahlonega) to make available a specialty license plate to honor Georgia's electric utility line workers, including Coweta Fayette EMC linemen. It was signed into law by Gov. Nathan Deal in May.

Proceeds will benefit the Southeastern Firefighters Burn Foundation (SFBF) which provides assistance to burn patients and their families at the Joseph M. Still Burn Center at Doctors Hospital in Augusta.

Specifically, the SFBF provides a place to stay for the families of burn patients at the Jeffrey Vaden Chavis House, just a few steps from the Burn Center, as well as meals and transportation to and from the hospital. After patients are discharged, the SFBF also provides assistance with prescriptions, anti-scarring garments and transportation to follow-up doctor visits. Georgians who are interested in purchasing a "Thank A Lineman" license plate can visit <http://www.sfbf.net/License-Plate> when renewing your annual motor vehicle registration. For the first 1,000 plates, the one-time \$25 specialty plate manufacturing fee will be waived by the Motor Vehicles Division of the Georgia Department of Revenue with a \$25 minimum donation to the Southeastern Firefighters Burn Foundation.

In addition, by an act of the General Assembly and Governor Deal, \$10 of the Georgia Department of Revenue's \$35 Annual Specialty Tag Fee for "Thank A Lineman" license plates will be contributed to SFBF each year for as long as the motorist renews the specialty plate.

We hope you'll consider purchasing a "Thank a Lineman" license plate to recognize line crews and support burn patients and their families through the important work of the Southeastern Firefighters Burn Foundation.





## The President's Message

*Chris Stephens  
President and CEO*

This year has flown by. Thanksgiving is already behind us and Christmas is knocking on the door. As this year ends, I thought it would be good to look back on 2017.

If you missed our recent 70<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting in October, you missed an exciting time celebrated by a record number of registered members, our Board of Directors and employees. I thought I would take this time to highlight some of the thoughts I shared with those in attendance.

CFEMC continues to grow—we now serve nearly 80,000 accounts—and that is a testament to you and the communities we call home. We know you care about your community and want to continue seeing it prosper. CFEMC is proud to play a part in that prosperity.

There are three words I feel describe Coweta-Fayette EMC. *Trusted. Dependable. Innovative.*

Cooperatives were born to meet the challenge of bringing electricity where investor-owned utilities refused to go. Your EMC has grown from powering a single lamp hanging in a home, to serving some of the area's largest industrial loads. The average residential member uses around 15,000 kWh per year. In 2016, C-F EMC delivered over 1.5 billion kWh to your homes and businesses.

Electricity powers more and more in our lives and we know dependability matters. That's why we are on call 24 hours a day to meet your needs. Our outage time per member for 2016 was 92 minutes. We're under the state average of 96 minutes and well under the national average for utilities of 103 minutes. Although we are doing well compared to other utilities, we always try to do better. We are taking advantage of technology and communications which help us identify problems faster and we have trained, skilled employees who respond as quickly and safely as possible. Our employees are our greatest asset. We recruit the best and offer training and education throughout their careers.

The Summer 2017 Georgia Public Service Commission's residential rate comparison for an average use of 1,000 kWh per month showed Coweta-Fayette EMC's rates ranked 22<sup>nd</sup> lowest out of the 94 other electric utilities in the state. Georgia Power ranked 53<sup>rd</sup>. Our cost per kilowatt hour is 11.5 cents for the average user. That's one cent lower than the state average of 12.5 cents per kilowatt hour. That is an

average savings of \$150.00 per year. We work hard to be good stewards of your money and find ways to control costs.

If revenues exceed the EMC's operational costs, this excess is allocated to you in proportion to your usage as capital credits. This revenue is used for system improvements like installing new poles, lines and transformers which keeps our debt down resulting in lower rates. When our financial condition allows, the board of directors approves capital credit refunds to members. Thanks to the financial strength of your EMC, the Board of Directors approved the return of over \$3.4 million in capital credit refunds this year. The most recent return covered the years of 1994, 1995, and 1996 and arrived in your mailboxes in September. Your Board of Directors have approved the return of nearly \$24M since 2000.

We have made investments in technology that paid dividends during the recent Hurricane Irma. In addition to the great work by our employees, technology assisted us in restoring electric service to 40,000 of you within 72 hours. Our advanced metering infrastructure allowed us to determine those without power. This solution also allows you to monitor your energy usage online through our website and mobile app, helping you to get daily meter readings which can make you aware of problems affecting your home before they show up on your power bill.

During Irma, we used technology to refeed some areas from other substations and our mapping and outage management system to pinpoint where problems were so we could restore your service more efficiently. We also used Facebook, Twitter and our website to keep you up to date on what was happening. Our messages were read over 60,000 times and our video posts were viewed over 15,000 times.

We are continuing to invest in a diverse energy portfolio. We will add an additional 15 megawatts of solar, bringing our total solar capacity to over 25 MWs by 2020.

Planning has been and always will be a major component of how Coweta-Fayette EMC operates. We promise to continue working hard to provide the trusted, dependable, and innovative service you have grown to expect. Our employees report to the office everyday with one goal in mind: safely delivering reliable, affordable electric service to you. I hope to see you at our 71<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting next year on October 13<sup>th</sup>.

Thank you for your continuing support and we thank you for your business. I look forward to 2018 being another great year for the members of Coweta-Fayette EMC.

# What Can Do?



If you are the Midwest Food Bank, \$1 can make a huge difference in the amount of food they can provide to organizations around our service area.



"For every dollar we get, we can receive, store or distribute \$25 in food," Will Garner, Executive Director for Midwest Food Bank, said. "Receiving the funds from Operation Round Up to purchase a cardboard baler will now net between \$300 and \$350 more each month for the food bank. We can take that \$300 and multiply it by \$25 and that will give us an additional \$15,000 worth of food to service local organizations. In the lifetime of this machine, just think about the impact your members' donation will have on families. It's really remarkable."

Coweta-Fayette EMC's Operation Round Up is all about neighbors helping neighbors.

"Pennies really do make a difference for the organizations in our area," Chairman of the Trust Board Glen Valencia said. "I'd encourage every Coweta-Fayette member to sign up for the program. It's simple to do. If you agree to participate, your electric bill is simply rounded up to the next whole dollar each month. If your bill was \$174.85 this month, it would be rounded up to \$175 and the 15 cents would go into the Operation Round Up Fund. That may not sound like much, but those few pennies can really add up if every member participated. Every bit of the donations goes to help local families and organizations, fund scholarships and help teachers educate our students."

Once food comes in, then the fun begins.

"You can look around and see just how much we have to offer," Garner said. "Everything in here has been donated. From month to month, we don't know what we are going to get. It varies all the time. From kitty litter to dog bones to steak – we just never know."

Once everything has been sorted, the agencies served are given an appointment time.

"A group of our volunteers literally take them shopping," Garner explained. "They go aisle by aisle and see what we have to offer this month. When their cart gets full, we load their vehicles and the agencies we are serving don't have to lift a finger."

Right now, the Midwest Food Bank gives away an average of \$1 million in food each month.

"I want you to image what that looks like," Garner said. "If you go to the grocery store and fill up a cart with food, that's

about \$200-\$250 worth of stuff. Here's what that looks like at Midwest Food Bank. We take that grocery cart full of food and push it out the door and give it away for free. Then we bring it back in, fill it up and give it away again for free. We do that every 10 minutes, of every hour, 7 days a week, all 30 days of the month."

Organizations like Midwest Food Bank rely on you.

"I need people to be connectors for us," Garner said.

"Those connectors can make a lot of difference. My favorite story about this involves our floor scrubbing machine. We use it to clean the floors because it's a food warehouse and we need a clean environment for our volunteers to serve. A 13-year-old girl came out and volunteered at the Food Bank. A few days later, she and her dad were walking through the Lowes in Fayetteville and she saw a floor scrubbing machine that had a for sale sign on it showing \$375. It was the machine Lowes had been using to scrub their floors. She asked her dad if the food bank could use that. Her dad called me right there from Lowes and asked if we wanted it. I said yes, we do. He went to the manager and they reduced the price by 10 percent more. We picked it up the next day. We got a \$2,500 refurbished machine for \$350 all because a 13-year-old girl thought, I wonder if the food bank can use this. So, we're asking everyone to just connect us with people who can make a difference – whether it's food, money, volunteers or stuff."



The Midwest Food Bank has other needs as well. Their wish list includes a new semi-tractor to assist with deliveries of food. Their next biggest need is cash.

"We can do more with their money than they can," Garner said. "If you go to Kroger's and buy \$25 worth of things, that gets a case of water, some hygiene items, and some canned goods. That's a blessing. We never turn that away. But, we can take \$25 cash and distribute \$625 worth of food. With money, we can do more. We understand sometimes people want to bring canned goods or bring something tangible to us. If you want to do that, our biggest needs are peanut butter, canned meats, pasta and rice. Those are the hardest to come by. We don't serve individual families; we serve the organizations that help them, and those organizations can't get enough of the proteins."

To learn more about CFEMC's Operation Round Up program or to sign up, please call 770-502-0226

# Operation Round Up Awards for 2017

**American Union Relief Society** received an award to support their summer program.

**Newnan-Coweta Youth Association** received funds to cover the installation cost of a new heating and air system for their facility.

**Project Linus** used their funds to purchase supplies for making blankets to be given to seriously ill children.

**Chalk Level Association** received a matching grant to help purchase equipment and materials for the Boys and Girls Club.

**The Family Patterns Matter** received funds to support their mentoring programs.

**Rachel's Gift, Inc.** used funds received for training, counseling, and keepsake boxes.

**FACTOR** received funds to provide sponsorships for senior citizens to attend their ENCORE leadership program.

**Armed Forces Mission** received funds to cover the cost of curriculum materials for 1 training program.

**Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)** used funds to purchase supplies for their emergency response trailers.

**The Real Life Center** received funds to purchase a commercial refrigerator for their food pantry.

**The Clearwater Academy** was awarded funds to purchase special curriculum, sensory learning materials and provide job coaches for their Career Independence and Academics (CIA) program

**The Fayette Fire Foundation** purchased an electronically-operated Lucas CPR device.

**The Midwest Food Bank** received an award toward the purchase of a cardboard baler for their warehouse.

**Fayette C.A.R.E. Clinic** received funds for the purchase of a special scale to weigh patients.

*continued on reverse*

# Operation Round Up Dollars at Work in Our Community

**Fayette Grandparents & Kin Raising Children (FGKRC)** used funds received to provide scholarships for kids to attend WinShape Camp.

**Fayette Pregnancy Resource Center** received an award to purchase diapers, baby clothes, blankets, baby food and other items for their Earn While You Learn program.

**The Metro Atlanta Recovery Residencies, Inc.** received an award to support their drug rehabilitation programs.

**The Palmetto Youth League** received funds used to purchase educational supplies for their STEM program for at-risk kids.

**Georgia Lions Lighthouse Foundation** purchased a new edging system for their vision optics program.

**The Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA)** used their award to send five (5) kids from our service area to summer camp.

**Southern Crescent Habitat for Humanity** received funds toward the costs of installing an indoor bathroom for an elderly man.

**Sunshine on a Ranney Day** received funds to remodel a bathroom and bedroom to accommodate a handicapped child.

In addition to awards given to local community organizations, Operation Round Up also gave: \$44,000 through the **Melissa Segars Scholarship program**, \$18,000 in **Technical Scholarships**, and \$30,000 through the **Bright Ideas program**.



**OPERATION  
ROUND UP®**

**COWETA-FAYETTE EMC**

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  
Daniel C. Langford, Jr.  
Alice J. Mallory  
Elwood Thompson  
Mildred A. Winkles

.....  
**POWERlines**

Editor: Chellie Phillips  
807 Collinsworth Road, Palmetto, GA 30268  
(770) 502-0226

**Coweta Fayette EMC is an equal opportunity  
provided and employer /M/F/Y/D**



**Coweta-Fayette**

**770-502-0226**  
**www.utility.org**



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

## Electrical Safety Activity

The holiday season is a festive time of year! Remember to keep electrical and fire safety in mind as you decorate your home.

Can you find the four hazards in the home below?  
Use the safety tips for clues.



### Electrical Safety Tips:

- Do not overload electrical outlets with too many decorations or appliances.
- Never leave a candle burning if you're not in the room.
- Make sure your tree is watered daily.
- Extension cords used for holiday decorations should be checked for fraying/damaged or exposed wires.

