



Coweta-Fayette

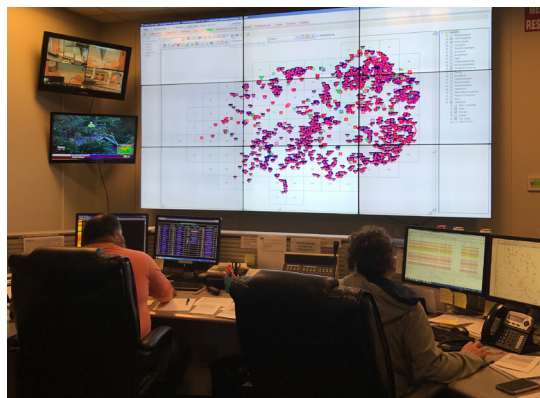


powerlines

PREPARATION IS KEY

What are the two best ways to prepare for hurricane season?

We spoke to David Nadler, the Warning Coordination Meteorologist at the Peachtree City Forecast Office with National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and Mac Hamilton, Real Estate Specialist and Disaster Response Plan Coordinator for Georgia Transmission Corporation (GTC), to learn how to prepare for the 2019 hurricane season.



Hurricane season 2019 is underway. It runs from June 1 to November 30. Although Coweta-Fayette EMCs territory is over 200 miles from the nearest coastline, we still face the risk of damage due to tropical storms.

"We are inland, and we aren't going to get the 140-mile per hour winds or the 15-foot storm surge. But, we can get 60-70 mile per hour winds," said Nadler. "It seems like we've been in the cross hairs or pretty close to some of these storms over the past few years."

Nadler said storm surge may not be our problem, but any tropical system moving through the area can bring down trees, cause significant flooding, and cause tornadoes.

"Look at what's happened over the last couple of years," said Nadler. "We had Irma back in 2017. We had Hermine back in 2016. Matthew skirted the coast, and Michael last year ripped through the southern part of the state," he said.

Researchers use complex computerized models using many variables to predict how many tropical systems and hurricanes might develop.

Factors like sea surface temperatures in the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico, as well as upper level winds (winds 10,000 to 15,000 feet off the ground) can both impact storm development.

This year, we are experiencing a mild el Niño pattern, which means slightly warmer sea-surface temperatures.

"The average is 12 named storms, 6 hurricanes and 3 major hurricanes, which are category 3 or higher," said Nadler. Last year, we had 15, 8 and 2. So far from what I've seen this year, researchers are predicting anywhere between 12 and 14 named storms, 5 and 7 hurricanes and 2 and 3 major hurricanes. It's all pretty close to average," he said.

To prepare for storms, Nadler said "making sure you're getting information is half the battle."

Having access to multiple communication channels is key. "I wouldn't solely rely on a weather app on the phone. Don't solely rely on an outdoor warning siren. Having a back-up, whether it's radio or television, is great."

As the Disaster Response Plan Coordinator with Georgia Transmission Corporation (GTC), which is the link between power generators and local EMC's throughout Georgia, Mac Hamilton focuses more on preparing for the worst possibility.

Hamilton proposed thinking about the "what-if questions" before a tropical storm occurs. "If Brunswick or Savannah were hit with a Category 5, Atlanta would see hurricane-force

winds," said Hamilton. "If you were seeing steady 75 mile per hour winds, what would that do to the trees in your yard? What would that do to the structures you have? Where would you feel most safe?"

"As a family, do you have a central place to meet? How do you communicate when communication is sparse," asked Hamilton.

Other questions we should ask ourselves are, "What happens if you're without power for a week? I think a lot of people

assume the lights are going to be on, but you saw Hurricane Michael."

CFEMC works constantly to enhance our system's reliability, however a direct hit from tropical storms, tornadoes and other severe weather events could cause major outages.

Hamilton said "I do think our thought patterns and conversations with family and friends about the what-if situations help us mentally run through those risks. It helps us prepare."

Hamilton suggested keeping a tote or bucket that can hold a water filter. He also suggested keeping canned foods or even dried or freeze-dried foods that will last for years.

"We're going to need to stay dry. We're going to need food and water. If nothing else, thinking through those potential responses puts you in a better place," said Hamilton.

Communication and a little bit of preparation after asking "what-if" questions are key to staying safe and weathering out any storm, not just tropical storms. Make sure to have conversations with your family and prepare before a storm arrives. For more resources to help you and your family stay informed and prepare for severe weather, check out ready.ga.gov.

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The President's Message

Chris Stephens
CEO

Isakson honored for life long service to Georgia's EMCs

Recently, Coweta Fayette EMCs management and board joined with EMCs from across the country in presenting Sen. Johnny Isakson, R-GA, the Distinguished Service Award from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) during its annual Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C.

The NRECA gives its Distinguished Service Award to public officials who have gone above and beyond in furthering the principles and progress of electric cooperatives and helping the Association advance its goals.

The Legislative Conference provides a rare opportunity for co-op leaders to gather in one place, at one time, with one voice, to personally engage with lawmakers at the national level and discuss important issues and concerns facing our communities back home.

It's important we build these relationships with our elected officials, and their staffs, so that when an issue arises that is important to our members and employees, we have a contact to express our concerns and let them know how they could affect our ability to provide safe, reliable and affordable electricity and related services to our members.

In my opinion, there's no better public servant who responds to our call than Senator Johnny Isakson.

Senator Isakson is a longtime member of Cobb EMC. He understands electric cooperatives and our cooperative principles. His unwavering support not only benefits EMCs here in Georgia, but those across the country.

One of the most recent efforts Senator Isakson supported and championed was Nuclear Production Tax Credits. This legislation included the ability for non-profit utility participants – like CFEMC – to take advantage of the credits. This will save electric co-ops who participate in the construction of nuclear energy millions of dollars, paving the way for clean, carbon-free base load energy.

CFEMC Board Chairman Jim Fulton joined me in presenting the honor to Senator Isakson.

He said, "There is no senator with a stronger commitment to our industry than Sen. Isakson. With the myriad of legislative initiatives which cross a senator's desk and need a champion, you have to have

a respected public servant with the stature of Senator Isakson to get the attention not only of his Senate peers, but of his House colleagues as well. He has, for his entire career both in the Georgia legislature, in the U.S. House and now in the U.S. Senate, been that marshal for our causes."



Sen. Johnny Isakson, R-Georgia, accepts NRECA's 2019 Distinguished Service Award. Pictured along with the Senator are: Flint Energies President and CEO Bob Ray, CFEMC CEO Chris Stephens, Georgia EMC President and CEO Dennis Chastain, CFEMC Board Chairman Jim Fulton, and CFEMC Board Secretary-Treasurer Neal Shepard. (Photo by Beth McMillan, Georgia EMC)

CFEMC Board of Directors Secretary-Treasurer J. Neal Shepard, Jr. and four-term Georgia legislator agreed.

"While I served in the legislature, Johnny was elected as leader of our caucus," Shepard said. "He gave us direction. When we had tough issues, you'd never go wrong watching Isakson and seeing how he handled issues. He never shied away from the big issues and always championed the cause of what was in the best interest of the state – no matter how tough that might be. In the 80's, we had the issue of Vogtle Units 1 and 2. There were

serious discussions on how we needed to phase in rates, handle cost overruns – all these similar to the issues we face at Vogtle today. Johnny took that bill and worked tirelessly on both sides of the aisle to get the votes needed to get it passed."

Isakson's ability to unify people has left a lasting mark.

"What I remember most about Johnny is the way he's able to pull people together," Shepard said. "He's always gone to people and said 'I know what we disagree on, but what can we agree on?' It's that gift that makes him a true diplomat and statesman. I've always said if we had more people in Washington like him, I wouldn't worry about our country."

According to Shepard, there's none more deserving of this award.

"Johnny has been supportive of EMCs and our issues as long as I can remember," Shepard said. "He's worked with us in the early days on issues like satellite, accountability, and always had a great relationship with Georgia EMC. In the last few years, he's worked on broadband and nuclear production tax credits. He's a great friend to us personally and to us as an industry."

In Georgia, and in our service territory, we're privileged to have national, state and local support in the legislature. It's vital we continue to educate our elected officials on the electric industry and the challenges we'll be facing in the future.

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