



# powerlines



Coweta-Fayette



## CFEMC CEO ANNOUNCES SPECIAL RETIREMENT OF PATRONAGE CAPITAL

Coweta-Fayette EMC isn't like other utilities – we're member owned. That means we keep you at the center of every business decision we make. We know we are living in unprecedented times and that many of you are facing financial difficulties due to the COVID-19 pandemic. To assist our member-owners financially, I am pleased to announce that your Board of Directors has approved a special retirement of capital credits, totaling \$5,000,000, for all members who received electric service from CFEMC in 2019. Qualified members will receive a credit on their May electric bill. You'll see your credit in green on a line item called Special Capital Credit Refund.

Capital credits are based on your patronage to the EMC. Each month when you pay your electric bill, a portion of that money is used to cover EMC operating expenses, like building lines, buying equipment and maintaining power lines. At the end of the year, CFEMC subtracts what it cost to do business from the amount collected, and the remaining funds – or margins – are allocated to each members' capital credit account based on how much you paid in throughout the year. When the EMC is financially sound,

your Board of Directors can determine to refund the credits to you.

CFEMC normally retires and pays out capital credits in October of each year. Including this retirement, CFEMC has returned more than \$35 million in capital credits to members since 2000.

Your Board's action will put extra funds into the pockets of you, our members, at a time many are struggling. This is just another way we are demonstrating we are about more than just providing electricity and making a profit. Our members are our friends and neighbors. I know by working together, we will all get through this. There are brighter days ahead.

Should you have any questions, please contact our Customer Service Department at 770-502-0226.

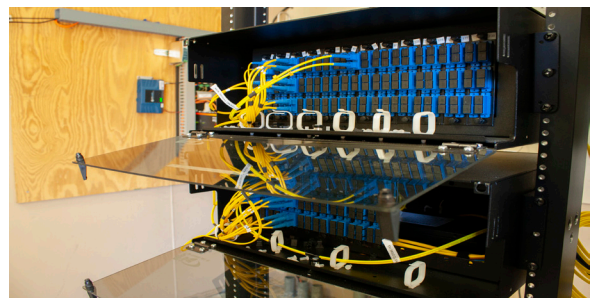
Sincerely,

Chris Stephens, CEO Coweta Fayette EMC

## TECHNOLOGY INCREASES RELIABILITY

It's a familiar scene: poles and wires stretching into the distance alongside the highway. This image might appear no different now than it did many years ago. But look more closely.

Invisible to most of us is an overlay of new equipment—chips, sensors, and fiber—linking remote distribution infrastructure to the utility's operations center using advanced communications technology.



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Those iconic poles and wires are now part of a “smart grid” that can be operated using software and automation.

“We’re monitoring over 15,000 status points from the field every second,” SCADA Engineer Justin Wren said. “Before fiber, we drove to the substation and downloaded the data from devices where faults occurred. (A fault is a disturbance in the flow of electricity.) Now we can analyze a fault in real-time. Something that might have taken an hour, now gets sent in an email in less than two minutes. With the addition of fiber optics we’ll be able to interpret the data much more quickly.”

Our goal is to build a backbone of fiber to connect our 28 substations across a multi-county area within three years.

“One of our primary motives for doing this is to improve the reliability of the system, improve outage restoration time and reduce our operational costs,”



CFEMC CEO Chris Stephens said.

Stephens said technology has evolved tremendously in the electric industry over the past couple of years. CFEMC is exploring everything from utilizing drones, adding renewable technology, and increasing cybersecurity.

Our employees aren’t the only ones who benefit from the enhanced technology. Here are some of the ways CFEMC members are already benefiting from the technology in place:

- **Fewer and shorter duration power outages.** In certain situations, smart switching can re-route power and isolate problems such as downed power lines, which reduces the number of people affected by an outage.

- **Pre-pay programs.** CFEMC offers pre-pay billing programs with lower connection fees and you control how much money you spend on electricity. Thanks to advanced digital meters, the EMC doesn’t need to send out a truck to physically reconnect the home.

- **Cost savings from increased efficiency.** Many of the new technologies are improving the efficiency of co-op operations—from reducing the amount of electricity lost in transmission to reducing the need for sending out trucks. These cost savings are passed on to co-op members.

“The biggest benefit is reliability,” Stephens said. “Utilizing technology will continue to make us more efficient and responsive to our members. It provides our employees with much-needed information so they can respond safely and quickly to situations as they arise.”

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*The  
 President’s  
 Message*

*Chris Stephens  
 CEO*

To say the first quarter of 2020 has been unusual is an understatement. I know each of you has been dealing with COVID-19 and the impact it is having on your life, both personally and professionally. Since the pandemic hit our area, we have paid close attention to all the information from both the state and national level. I’m extremely proud of how our employees have stepped up to the challenge and adapted to new job situations while continuing to make sure you received the same level of service you’ve come to expect from CFEMC.

On March 31st, while already dealing with one crisis, we were faced with another, when storms blew through our system knocking power out to over 36,000 members. We had 8 substations without power and over 70 broken poles. This all happened in about 20 minutes. Our employees stepped up to the plate and the response was amazing. In less than 40 hours, along with the help of sister EMC’s and contract crews, we successfully restored service to all our members, replaced all the broken poles and handled hundreds of calls.

CFEMC prepares for a variety of crisis situations and we update our emergency response plans diligently. This health crisis has allowed us to test new systems and technologies that I feel will continue to be beneficial for us down the road. We’ve been able to focus on the safety of our employees and their families, while at the same time, providing you with reliable and dependable electric service.

Even in these trying times, we’ve kept you at the center of all our business decisions. From suspending disconnections for non-payment, to limiting contact with employees and asking for your help in rescheduling non-essential /non-critical work, we came together and got done what needed to be done. More importantly, we’ve done it safely. Please continue to be diligent with your health, and that of your family. I look forward to the day when things are “normal” again.