

FEBRUARY 2024

Coweta-Fayette EMC 

POWERLINES

Stay safe, warm and weather aware

A NEWSLETTER FROM
COWETA-FAYETTE EMC



When winter temperatures drop and storms hit, it can be challenging to stay safe and warm. While you may not know when a storm is coming, you can be prepared for it just like we do at CFEMC.

Strong winds, flooding, cold temperatures and even occasional ice storms can not only cause devastating property damage, they can also wreak havoc on Coweta-Fayette's electric system. In some cases, extensive damage can leave homes without power for an extended amount of time. During extremely low temperatures, this can be dangerous.

During a power outage, our crews will continue to work as quickly and safely as possible to restore power, but there are a few things you can do to prepare.

- Stay safe – When an outage occurs, it may indicate that power lines are down. It is best not to travel during winter storms, but if you must, bring a survival kit along, and do not travel alone. If you encounter downed lines, always assume they are live. Stay as far away from the downed lines as possible, and report the situation to our dispatchers by calling 770-502-0226 if possible.

- Stay fed – The CDC recommends having several days' supply of food that does not need to be cooked handy. Crackers, cereal, canned goods and bread are good options. Five gallons of water per person should also be available in the event of an extended power outage.

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- Stay warm – Plan to use a safe alternate heating source, such as a fireplace or wood-burning stove during a power outage. These are great options to keep you and your loved ones warm, but exercise caution when using, and never leave the heating source unattended. If you are using gasoline-, propane- or natural gas-burning devices to stay warm, never use them indoors. Remember that fuel and wood-burning sources of heat should always be properly ventilated. Always read the manufacturer's directions before using.

Winter weather can be unpredictable and dangerous, and planning ahead can often be the difference between life and death. Coweta-Fayette EMC cares about your safety, and we want you to be prepared.

For more information on power restoration and safety, visit <https://utility.org/outage-safety/>. You can report an outage via phone at (770) 502-0226, online at <https://outage.utility.org/>, or sign up for text alerts at <https://utility.org/text-an-outage/>.



CONTACT US: ☎ 770-502-0226 🌐 WWW.UTILITY.ORG

HOME ENERGY EFFICIENCY

TIP OF THE MONTH



BE SURE TO SEAL YOUR DUCT SYSTEM THIS WINTER!

ONE OF THE MAJOR CAUSES OF HIGH ENERGY BILLS DURING THE WINTER SEASON IS A LEAKY DUCT SYSTEM.

Eliminate all air leakage in your heating, ventilation, and cooling (HVAC) duct system by routinely inspecting your system. This can be done by visual inspection or by a qualified professional.



Did you know Coweta-Fayette EMC performs home energy inspections for our members? Contact CFEMC today at (770) 502-0226 to schedule an appointment.

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The President's Message



Chris Stephens, CEO

We have received several calls about the power cost adjustment (PCA) on your bills. Just like you want to keep your household budget in line, CFEMC needs to stay within budget too. The PCA is how we do that. It can go up and down over time based on costs the cooperative encounters. Last year, fuel costs dropped from what had been forecasted and we were able to lower the PCA and pass that savings on to you. That's what makes the cooperative business model great. Since we are not-for-profit, when we receive a savings, we pass it along to you. And as a cooperative, anything over and above what it costs us to operate and maintain the system is allocated to you in the form of capital credits.

Last month I shared with you the impact federal regulations, the fluctuating fuel market, and the impact Plant Vogtle Units 3 and 4 have had on utilities across Georgia. We are not alone in this. Everyone who receives power generated from these units are being impacted. Your Board of Directors and the CFEMC staff continue to diligently work to minimize the impact these factors have on your monthly bill.

The rate you pay as an EMC member is a cost-based rate. That means they are designed to recoup what it costs CFEMC to service your account and provide you with reliable electricity. It's a more equitable way to distribute the costs associated with serving each member, regardless of the number of kilowatt hours (kWh) you use.

To ensure our rates cover the fixed costs associated with providing power to your homes and businesses, we conducted a cost-of-service study and a detailed review of all our rates. Fixed costs are everything that is necessary to connect your home or business to the power grid. Your service has poles, wires, transformers, meters, conductors and, of course, the manpower to set up the service. After that, there is billing, payment processing, service requests and system maintenance that must be carried out each month. Material costs, regulatory costs, and the cost of the plant that generates your electricity are also factors that must be considered. Even if we never move or distribute a single kilowatt over the wires, we still face these expenses in keeping the facilities in place to provide that energy when you need it.

CFEMC has not had a rate change since 2007, and much has changed. The cost of a gallon of gas averaged \$2.28; today, that same gallon costs \$2.93. The average hamburger combo at a fast-food restaurant cost you \$2.64 cents. Today, that cost is around \$6.19. Just as you have experienced increases in the prices of items at the grocery store and the cost of fuel, CFEMC has experienced rising expenses too.

As we evaluate our rates and fixed costs, we understand that any increase is a matter of concern for our members, and we want to assure you that we are doing everything within our power to make this transition as smooth as possible. We encourage you to explore the various options we offer to help you manage your power bill, including automatic payment options, leveled billing, prepay, energy audits, and energy efficiency programs. We strive to provide timely information through various channels, including Powerline articles, social media, our website, podcast episodes, and more. For any questions regarding your rate, please feel free to call us at 770-502-0226.

We appreciate your understanding and support as we navigate these changes together. CFEMC remains dedicated to delivering the reliable power you depend on while striving to keep costs as low as possible. Thank you for being a valued member of Coweta-Fayette EMC.