

Electric News

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At LOEMC, the Emphasis is on Safety Above All Else

By Lewis Sheffield, General Manager

"Safety" is a universal word that is mentioned often. Companies across all industries are generally committed to safety, although there are times it would be easy to ignore safety in the interest of convenience or expediency. However, safety is a serious issue, especially electrical safety.



At Little Ocmulgee EMC, we've created a culture of safety by putting our employees' safety and that of the

community above all else. Each day, we strive to deliver affordable and reliable electricity to our member-owners. Equally important, we want our employees to return home safely to their loved ones. To do this requires ongoing focus, dedication and vigilance.

Following leading national safety standards

Working with electricity is an inherently dangerous job, especially for lineworkers. Georgia EMC (GEMC), our statewide trade association, has a safety team whose primary focus is keeping our employees and the community safe around electricity. Working with GEMC, our safety team establishes and follows safety protocols based on leading national safety practices for the utility industry.

We require our lineworkers to wear specialized equipment when working near or with power lines. There are specific protocols that our lineworkers follow when dealing with electricity. Our safety team has regular meetings to discuss upcoming projects from a safety

perspective. They monitor and track near-misses of accidents in order to understand them, share lessons learned and improve in the future. Data is examined to discern patterns and use safety metrics to improve in areas where we have fallen short.



As important, we encourage all of our crews to hold each other accountable for safety. By cultivating a culture of openness and transparency, we promote problem-solving with regard to safety. In addition, we brief contractors on our safety protocols and set expectations for their engagement.

Keeping the community safe

Because we live and work in the community we serve, we care about our neighbors. Periodically, we conduct electrical safety demonstrations in schools and for community events.

According to the Electrical Safety Foundation, each year thousands of people in the United States are critically injured or electrified as a result of electrical fires or accidents in their homes. Many of these accidents are preventable.

Don't attempt electrical do-it-yourself projects or overload your outlets. Report downed power lines, unlocked substations or pad-mounted transformers that look amiss. You can find more helpful information at www.esfi.org.

Be mindful and pause when it comes to electricity; take the extra time to plug into safety. It's easy to take electricity for granted, but electricity is powerful and must be respected. Maintaining safety requires training, personal commitment and constant vigilance.



Little Ocmulgee EMC to Celebrate 80 Years of Service to the Members

The 80th Little Ocmulgee EMC Annual Meeting of Members will be held Nov. 14, 2018, at the Wheeler County High School gymnasium in Alamo. Doors will open promptly at 12:30 p.m. for member registration.

Prior to the business session, which begins at 2 p.m., there will be a health fair, vendor booths and gospel entertainment. Door prizes will be awarded at the conclusion of the meeting.

Pursuant to the Little Ocmulgee EMC Bylaws, a committee to nominate members for directorship has been appointed. The following members will serve:

- **Laurens County (District 1):** Jimmy Butler, Curtis Pauldo, Larry Windham
- **Telfair/Dodge counties (District 2):** Marty Kinnett, Carey Knowles, John E. Seay
- **Wheeler/Montgomery counties (District 3):** Carey Clark, Tommy Clark, Jamie Nobles

If you have comments or suggestions concerning nominations or persons who wish to be considered for director nomination, please contact these committee members.

The Nominating Committee will meet Aug. 28, 2018, to make director nominations. One director from each district is elected each year and will serve



staggered three-year terms.

Directors seeking re-election for another three-year term are:

- **Laurens County (District 1):** Grant Rowe
- **Telfair/Dodge counties (District 2):** George Best
- **Wheeler/Montgomery counties (District 3):** Benny Evans

Nominations for directors can also be made by petition, which must be signed by 15 or more Little Ocmulgee EMC members and submitted to the co-op no later than Sept. 14, 2018, at 5 p.m. Nominations are not allowed from the floor at the Annual Meeting.

Full Nondiscrimination Statement

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- (1) **mail:** U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) **fax:** (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) **email:** program.intake@usda.gov

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Stay Focused on Safety During Harvest



During harvest season, many farmers benefit from advances in agricultural technology. With the help of GPS auto-steer devices, farmers can decrease driver error and maximize productivity. But safety risks remain. To help farmers stay out of harm's way, Safe Electricity (a public awareness program of the Energy Education Council) shares tips for a safe harvest.

GPS with auto-guidance provides farmers with real-time location data about a field, which can be used for crop planning, mapmaking, navigation assistance



and machinery guidance. During harvest, this technology allows drivers to have their hands off the steering wheel as the combine maneuvers itself through the field. Thanks to

this technology, farmers can more easily and efficiently maintain accuracy even during low-light conditions, which enhances productivity.

“One critical part of safety around electricity is awareness,” explains Krista Lisser, Communications Director of the Safe Electricity program. “It’s important to remember that farm machinery is vulnerable to hitting power lines because of its large size, height and extensions. Being aware of the location of overhead power lines and planning a safe equipment route can help reduce accidents.”

In equipment with auto-guidance systems, less focus is needed on steering, which may lead some drivers to think they do not need to be as aware of navigation issues. However, even while using a GPS with auto-steering, farmworkers need to keep safety in mind and stay focused on their surroundings.

Putting safety first requires alertness, focus and knowledge of potential hazards and safety steps. Varying pass-to-pass accuracy levels and potential

issues, such as power poles not being correctly plotted in the system, reinforce the need for drivers to stay focused on the location of the farm equipment while in the field and to be ready to take action if necessary.

Keep the following electrical safety guidelines in mind:

- Use a spotter when operating large machinery near power lines.
- Keep equipment at least 10 feet from power lines—at all times, in all directions.
- Look up and use care when moving any equipment such as extending augers or raising the bed of grain trucks around power lines.
- Inspect the height of farm equipment to determine clearance.
- Always set extensions to the lowest setting when moving loads to prevent contact with overhead power lines. Grain augers should always be positioned horizontally before being moved.
- Never attempt to move a power line out of the way or raise it for clearance.
- If a power line is sagging or low, contact Little Ocmulgee EMC at (912) 568-7171 or (800) 342-1290.

If your equipment does make contact with a power line, do not leave the cab. Immediately call 911, warn others to stay away and wait for the utility crew to cut the power.

The only reason to exit equipment that has come into contact with overhead lines is if the equipment is on fire, which is rare. However, if this is the case, jump off the equipment with your feet together and without touching the ground and machinery at the same time. Then, keeping your feet together, hop to safety as you leave the area.

For more information on electrical safety, visit SafeElectricity.org.

The Energy Education Council is a nonprofit membership organization providing consumer safety and energy efficiency materials to more than 400 co-ops.

EYEING THE STORM: PAST AND FUTURE

The Atlantic hurricane season is **June** to **November**, with the **peak season** from **mid-August** to **late October**. On average there are six hurricanes, three of which are categorized as "major", each year. History provides important examples of the potentially dangerous impact hurricanes can have and the need to be prepared.



The **deadliest hurricane in U.S. history**, referred to as the "**Great Galveston Hurricane**", struck Texas in 1900 and resulted in an estimated **11,000** deaths.

11,000 DEATHS



Since 1851, the top three states for hurricane landfalls are **Florida (114)**, **Texas (63)** and **Louisiana (54)**, according to data from the Atlantic Oceanographic and Meteorological Laboratory in Miami.

231 HURRICANE LANDFALLS
IN TOP 3 STATES (SINCE 1851)



Hurricane Sandy caused **8.5 million power outages** across 21 states, the highest outage total ever.

8.5 MILLION POWER OUTAGES



23 days after **Hurricane Katrina** local utilities had power restored to only **three-quarters** of their customers.

ONLY **3/4** HAD POWER RESTORED

ESFI OFFERS THESE SAFETY TIPS TO HELP YOU:



PREPARE

- Unplug your appliances and power cords from outlets to **protect** them from **power surges**.
- If you plan to use a portable generator, ESFI recommends a **licensed electrician** install it to ensure it will **operate safely**.
- **Test** your home's **carbon monoxide detectors** and **smoke alarms** to ensure they're functioning.



WEATHER

- **Stay indoors** during the hurricane and away from windows and glass.
- Use **flashlights** as a source of light. Candles are a fire hazard.
- **Never operate a generator inside your home** or in other enclosed or partially-enclosed spaces, including the garage.
- Use a **battery-operated** radio to stay informed about important safety updates.



RECOVER

- If **flood** waters reached the level of electrical outlets, contact a **licensed electrician** before attempting to use electricity in the home.
- Prior to use, have a qualified service repair dealer determine what electrical equipment should be **replaced** and what can be **reconditioned**.
- **Never touch** a fallen power line or drive through standing water if a downed power line is nearby. **Report downed lines** to local authorities.

ESFI Additional severe weather safety information is available at www.esfi.org.



www.facebook.com/ESFI.org



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www.youtube.com/user/esfidotorg