

# Electric News

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## Tree Trimming Improves Service for All

One of the things we love best about our community is the natural beauty that surrounds us. We are fortunate to have so many trees that offer beauty, shade and a habitat for all sorts of birds and other wildlife. We know that you appreciate our community for many of the same reasons.

At Little Ocmulgee EMC (LOEMC), we strive to balance maintaining beautiful surroundings and ensuring safe, reliable, affordable power supply by keeping power lines clear in rights of way (ROW). While we recognize and appreciate the beauty of trees, there are three main benefits to tree trimming in ROW areas. However, before touching on the main reasons, you should know what a right of way is and how it may affect you.

ROWs are the land we use to construct, maintain, replace or repair underground and overhead power lines. The 20-foot ROW on either side of the line enables the co-op to provide clearance from trees and other obstructions that could hinder the power line installation, maintenance or operation. ROW areas are typically on public land or located near a business or home. LOEMC must be able to maintain the power lines above and below the ROW.

The goal of our vegetation management program is to provide safe, reliable, affordable power to our members while maintaining the beauty of our community. Proactive vegetation management benefits co-op members in three tangible ways.

### Safety

First and foremost, we care about our members and put their safety and that of our lineworkers above all else. Overgrown vegetation and trees pose a risk to power lines. For example, if trees touch power lines in our members' yards, they can pose grave danger to

families. If children can access those trees, they could climb into a danger zone. Electricity can arc, or jump, from a power line to a nearby conductor like a tree.

A proactive approach also diminishes the chances of branches or trees falling during severe weather, which makes it more complicated and dangerous for lineworkers to restore power.



### Reliability

Of course, one of the biggest benefits of a smart vegetation management program is reliability. Strategic tree trimming reduces the frequency of downed lines causing power outages. Generally speaking, healthy trees don't fall on power lines, and clear lines don't cause problems. Proactive trimming and pruning keep lines clear to promote reliability.

### Affordability

As you know, Little Ocmulgee EMC is a not-for-profit cooperative, which means we strive to keep our costs in check to keep our rates affordable. This extends to our approach to right-of-way management. If trees grow too close to power lines, the potential for expensive repairs also increases. Effective tree trimming and other vegetation management efforts keep costs down for everyone.

Our community is a special place. We appreciate the beauty trees afford, but we also know our community depends on us to provide reliable energy. In and around your neighborhood you might notice crews spraying, mulching, side-trimming and removing trees. These are crews that LOEMC contracts to clear ROW areas. Cleanup crews will follow two to three days after their initial cutting to clear the debris left behind.

Through right-of-way maintenance, we are better able to keep the power lines clear, prepare for future weather events and secure the reliability of the grid.

# Little Ocmulgee EMC to Celebrate 83 Years of Service to the Members

**T**he 83rd Little Ocmulgee EMC Annual Meeting of Members will be held Nov. 10, 2021, 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.

**Little Ocmulgee EMC  
Annual Meeting of Members  
will be held on  
Wednesday, Nov. 10, 2021  
at the Wheeler County  
High School gymnasium in Alamo**



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, 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. 24, 2021, to make director nominations. One director from each district is elected each year and will serve staggered three-year terms.

Directors seeking reelection for another three-year term are:

- **Laurens County (District 1):** Open
- **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. 10, 2021, at 5 p.m. Nominations are not allowed from the floor at the annual meeting.

## Energy Efficiency *Tip of the Month*



When shopping for lightbulbs, know the difference between lumens and watts. Lumens measure the amount of light produced by the bulb. Watts measure energy consumption. Energy-saving LEDs come in a variety of colors and brightness levels and last 15-25 times longer than incandescent bulbs.

—Source: *energy.gov*



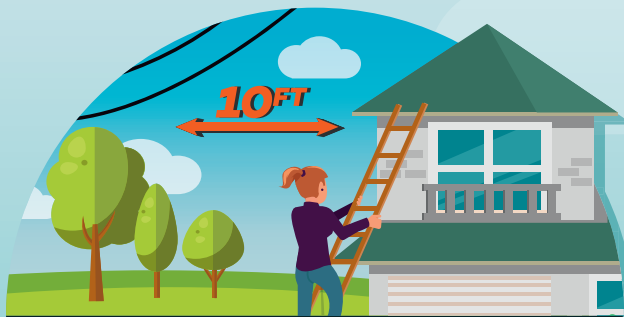
# Home Electrical Safety

## Always Look Up Always

Before starting **any** project, **be alert of where the power lines are located**, and know how high they are hanging. Whether you're working on the roof, trimming trees, or painting your siding, it's your job to be aware and to **alert others about nearby power lines**.



1. Locate **all** overhead power lines.



2. Stay at least **10 feet** away from all overhead power lines.



3. **Do not touch** anything in contact with power line.



4. Carry ladders and equipment **horizontally**.



5. Stay at least **35 feet** away from downed power lines and call 911.



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# Options Abound for Cooling Your Home

BY PAT KEEGAN AND BRAD THIESSEN

**T**here are several ways to make your home more comfortable this summer. Some solutions are inexpensive, while others require a bigger investment. In the end, you can be more comfortable and have lower energy bills.

The first step is to reduce your home's solar gains (the heat energy it collects from the sun). Most solar gains originate through your home's windows, so awnings are an effective solution. They can reduce solar heat gain by as much as 65 percent on south-facing windows and 77 percent on west-facing windows.

You also can try less expensive solutions on the outside or inside of your windows, such as reflective films and solar screens. Heavy window coverings have the added benefit of reducing heat loss in winter.


Skylights and attics can be major sources of heat gain. Reflective film or specially designed window coverings are potential solutions for skylights. Attics can become extremely hot and radiate heat through the ceiling into your living space. Abundant venting through the roof, gable or eaves is one solution, but you also need adequate attic insulation.

Another important step is to seal air leaks around windows, doors, plumbing and wiring penetrations to keep warm air out and cool air in.

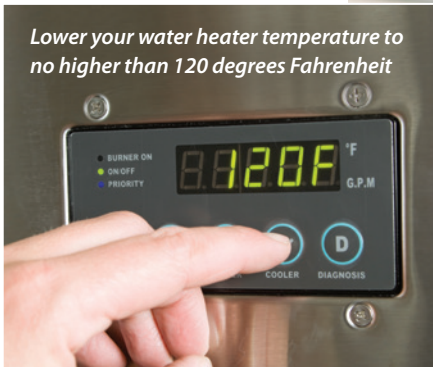
Excess heat also can be generated inside your home—and at your expense. Here are some simple steps to limit that:

- Turn off lights and TVs in rooms that aren't in use.
- Replace incandescent lightbulbs, which generate a lot of heat, with LEDs.
- Unplug devices you aren't using, such as chargers, computers, monitors and consumer electronics. Many of these use phantom power that keeps them on constantly (even when they're not in use), which generates heat.
- Maintain appliances for peak efficiency. For example, clean your refrigerator coils.
- Lower your water heater temperature to no higher than 120 degrees Fahrenheit and your refrigerator to no lower than 38 degrees Fahrenheit. Also consider insulating your hot-water pipes.
- Minimize use of your oven, and don't run the dishwasher or washing machine until they are full.

Now that you've worked on keeping heat out of your home, let's look at how to make the inside air cooler. That



*Replace incandescent lightbulbs, which generate a lot of heat, with LEDs.*



*Lower your water heater temperature to no higher than 120 degrees Fahrenheit*

starts with assessing your air-conditioning (A/C) system.

If you have central A/C, make sure it's working efficiently. Replace the filters regularly, and make sure your supply registers are open. A/C systems need to push an adequate amount of air into the supply ductwork to function properly.

If you do not have central A/C, an ENERGY STAR-certified window unit can be an efficient solution to cool parts of the home part of the time. Make sure to seal any openings around the window unit.

The least expensive way to cool yourself is air movement. A ceiling fan or portable fan can make a room feel up to 10 degrees cooler, but keep in mind that fans cool people, not rooms. Turn them off when you leave a room.

If the night air is cool and not too humid where you live, you can exchange your hot air for cool outdoor air by opening the windows. Or you can place a fan in one window to exhaust the warm air and open another window at the opposite end of the house to allow the cooler night air inside. The permanent (but more expensive) option is to install a whole-house fan.

For more information about staying comfortable during summer months, visit [collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips](http://collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips).

*Pat Keegan and Brad Thiessen write for Collaborative Efficiency, which works with rural electric cooperatives to develop energy-efficiency programs that benefit them and the communities they serve.*