

# Electric News

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## We Are Prepared for Summer Storms

By Lewis Sheffield, General Manager

Summer is here, school is out and families are gearing up for a few months of fun and relaxation. While summer brings much fun in the sun, it can also bring the occasional severe storm. In the event of a power outage, you can trust that Little Ocmulgee EMC is ready to respond.

Most power outages are caused by damage to power lines from falling trees and branches or their contact with live lines during high winds. We work year-round—through right-of-way clearing—to ensure power lines in our service territory stand little risk of being damaged by trees, branches or other types of vegetation.

Despite our best efforts, during major storms, damage can occur to transmission lines, substations and distribution power lines. When this happens, our first priority is to safely restore power to as many members as possible in the shortest amount of time.

We start by mobilizing our line crews and other critical staff. Every available phone line is utilized to take your outage report calls. This is why it is important to keep



your phone number(s) and other personal information current with us. We want

to be able to quickly identify your account(s) so we can safely restore your power as quickly as possible.

We also offer callbacks at your request to ensure your power was restored. Once an outage ticket is taken, the big problems are handled first—like damage to three-phase lines, which serve hundreds of people. These prob-

lems must be corrected before we can focus on other areas where more localized damage may have occurred.

Little Ocmulgee EMC's line crews inspect substations to determine if the problem starts there, or if there could be an issue down the line. If the root of the problem is at the substation, power can be restored to thousands of members from that source as long as there are no more issues down the line.

Next, line crews check the main distribution lines, tap lines and service lines that deliver power into neighborhoods and communities right up to your meter base. Line crews work to repair the damaged lines until power is restored to all members. If you continue to experience an outage, there may be damage to your individual service. Make sure you notify Little Ocmulgee EMC so crews can inspect these lines.

We will do our best to avoid power outages, but sometimes the weather has other plans. Please know our employees are trained and ready to serve as safely and efficiently as possible.

*For more on how power is restored, see the graphic on page 20B.*



# Powering Up

When electricity goes out, most of us expect power will be restored within a few hours. But when a major storm causes widespread damage, longer outages may result. Co-op line crews work long, hard hours to restore service safely to the greatest number of consumers in the shortest time possible.

**Here's what's going on if you find yourself in the dark:**

## **1 High-Voltage Transmission Lines**

Transmission towers and cables that supply power to transmission substations (and thousands of members) rarely fail. But when damaged, these facilities must be repaired before other parts of the system can operate.

## **2 Distribution Substation**

Each substation serves hundreds or thousands of consumers. When a major outage occurs, line crews inspect substations to determine if problems stem from transmission lines feeding into the substation, the substation itself or if problems exist down the line.

## **3 Main Distribution Lines**

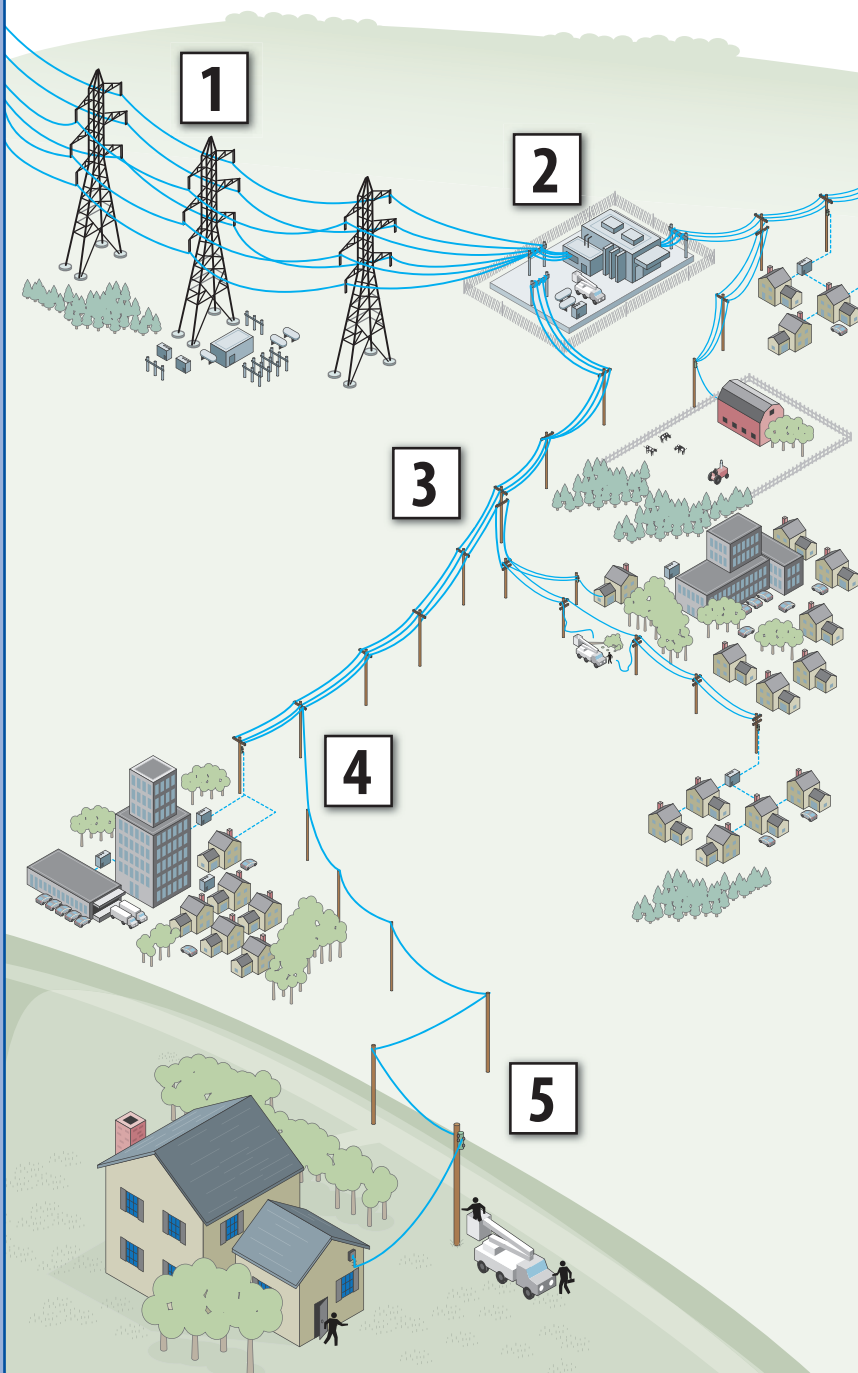
If the problem cannot be isolated at a distribution substation, distribution lines are checked. These lines carry power to large groups of consumers in communities or housing developments.

## **4 Tap Lines**

If local outages persist, supply lines called tap lines are inspected. These lines deliver power to transformers, either mounted on poles or placed on pads for underground service, outside businesses, schools and homes.

## **5 Individual Homes**

If your home remains without power, the service line between a transformer and your residence may need to be repaired. Always call to report an outage to help line crews isolate local issues.



# Utility Notification Requirements for Anyone Working Within 10 Feet of a High-Voltage Line

**C**ontractors and landowners have substantial compliance responsibility when working near an electric utility's underground and overhead distribution power lines. Georgia law and Little Ocmulgee EMC regulations require contractors and landowners to contact Georgia 811 before working near power lines.

Little Ocmulgee EMC hopes to avoid personal injuries, unnecessary power outages and line damage associated with accidents involving its electric distribution facilities. Contractors can avoid substantial equipment damage and repair costs, as well as personal injuries to their employees, if they abide by these requirements.

These regulations apply to contractors, well drillers, farmers, landowners and others who may have a personal business interest in work performed near power lines. While the following rules address overhead power lines, Georgia law requires that anyone digging in Georgia must contact Georgia 811 at least three days before construction begins so utility companies can be contacted to mark underground facilities.

## High-Voltage Safety Act

The High-Voltage Safety Act became law in Georgia on July 1, 1992. This act requires individuals performing work within 10 feet of overhead high-voltage electric power lines to notify Georgia 811 during its regular business hours at least 72 hours prior to beginning the work (excluding weekends and holidays).

Georgia 811 will then contact the owner of the power lines to take appropriate safety measures to prevent injuries, property damage and

interruptions of utility service resulting from accidental or inadvertent contact with high-voltage electric lines. Failure to call Georgia 811 constitutes a violation of the law and can result in fines and penalties, in addition to liability for repair of damages.

Contractors are encouraged to become familiar with the details of the High-Voltage Safety Act. Information is available directly from Georgia 811. Use the same telephone number for notifications or contact them on their website.

**Georgia 811**  
**Statewide: 811**  
**Nationwide: 811**  
**[www.gaupc.com](http://www.gaupc.com)**

## Special Notice to Farmers

Modern farm equipment can be raised or lowered to allow for harvesting greater amounts with fewer delays. Use of this equipment requires that you check fields and roads where your equipment may come within 10 feet of overhead power lines.

The power lines were installed to comply with the National Electrical Safety Code clearance guidelines at the time of construction. If any part of your equipment will be within 10 feet of overhead power lines, you must notify Georgia 811 at least 72 hours before you work under the power lines.

## Wells and Pumps

The well driller and the landowner bear responsibility to notify Georgia 811 when any equipment or materials will be within 10 feet of overhead high-voltage power lines. For safety reasons, installation of wells and well pumps at distances closer than 30 feet from any overhead

power line should generally be avoided, but in locations where the options for well placement are limited, Little Ocmulgee EMC will help determine the minimum clearance requirements, as specified in the National Electrical Safety Code.

Minimum clearance requirements for the location of wells and well pumps vary according to the line voltage and certain site-specific attributes, and Little Ocmulgee EMC should be consulted to determine the appropriate minimum recommended distance. Clearance requirements vary with the voltage of the power line, height of the line aboveground, distance to poles that support the line and other local factors that determine where a drilling rig will be stationed for installation and future maintenance or pump replacement activities.

A Little Ocmulgee EMC representative will meet with the well driller and/or landowner to determine the minimum acceptable distance if the desired pump location is closer than 30 feet from an overhead line.

## Easements

Little Ocmulgee EMC's service rules and regulations require the contractor to notify Little Ocmulgee EMC directly if proposed work and/or construction will be performed inside the utility's easement. In most cases, the easement extends 20 feet on each side of the power line. Little Ocmulgee EMC will provide the necessary protection to avoid hazards. Again, consideration should be given to providing plenty of time to respond.

Call Little Ocmulgee EMC's Engineering Department at (912) 568-7171 or (800) 342-1290 and ask to speak with a representative.



# Notice of Patronage Capital Assignment for 2023

**B**ecause Little Ocmulgee EMC is a not-for-profit cooperative, revenue collected in excess of expenses is eventually returned to the co-op's member-owners, our electric customers. After each year is completed, margins are assigned to members' accounts so they can be paid later as capital credits.

Assigned margins are retained for several years to be used, in place of borrowed money, as a source of funding for the construction of new lines and other utility plant expenses. This helps the cooperative keep the cost of providing service as low as possible. When financial conditions are favorable, the margins are returned as capital credits to members.

The assignment is made by applying the percentage of the cooperative's margins (revenues in excess of expenses) to each member's total billing for the year (excluding sales tax). In addition, margins are assigned to Little Ocmulgee EMC by other organizations with which it is associated, such as Cooperative Finance Corp., CoBank, Gresco, Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange and Southeastern Data Corp. The percentage assigned from these associated organizations is assigned to each member each year in the same manner as above.

$$\frac{\text{2023 total operating margins} + \text{2023 total associated organizations}}{\text{2023 total sales of electric energy}} = \frac{\$1,233,314}{\$24,092,201} = 0.051191408$$

## Little Ocmulgee Electric Membership Cooperative 2023 Patronage Capital Assignment Factors

	Allocation Factor	If your total bills were: (excluding sales tax)		
		\$500	\$1,000	\$2,000
2023 patronage capital assigned for Little Ocmulgee EMC	0.038542141	\$ 19.27	\$ 38.54	\$ 77.08
2023 patronage capital assigned from associated organizations	0.012649267	\$ 6.32	\$ 12.65	\$ 25.30
2023 total patronage capital assigned	0.051191408	\$ 25.60	\$ 51.19	\$ 102.38

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To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

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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
- (3) **Email:** [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

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