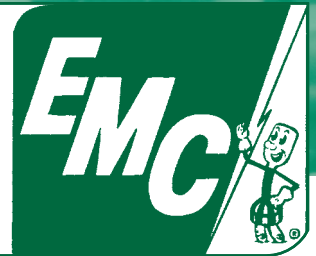


Electric News

Published for Members of the Little Ocmulgee EMC

FEBRUARY/MARCH/APRIL 2026 • VOLUME 49, NUMBER 1



10 Things You Might Not Know About Power Restoration

Have you ever watched a video or TV show where a person is cooking a meal, then suddenly, they snap their fingers and the meal is plated and ready to eat? That's called a jump cut.

While we wish we could jump cut from a power outage to power restoration, it can often take a lot more effort and people to make it happen.

Here at Little Ocmulgee EMC, we are accustomed to members' questions about power outages and why

it takes time to get the lights back on. Given our reliance on electricity, there's simply never a good time to be without it.

We would like to shed light on our restoration process to help our members understand what may be happening behind the scenes. Here are 10 things you might not know about restoration:

1. We need you. When your power goes out, it might be just at your home or in a small section of a

neighborhood. You can report an outage by calling us at (912) 568-7171 or (800) 342-1290. This helps us respond quickly and effectively—helping not only you but possibly also your neighbors.

2. Our employees might be affected, too. Because Little Ocmulgee EMC is a local electric cooperative owned by the members we serve, our employees are local, too. They are your neighbors,

Continued on page 18D

COMMON CAUSES OF POWER OUTAGES

There is never a good time for the power to go out, but if it happens on a sunny day, you might be left wondering why. Here are the most common causes of a power outage.

WEATHER

Wind and rain can cause tree limbs to fall on power lines. Other weather effects, like lightning strikes, can cause major damage to equipment.

CRITTERS

Squirrels, birds, snakes and other animals can inadvertently contact power lines, causing short circuits and disruptions to electrical supply.

Scheduled MAINTENANCE

Occasionally, we plan outages to perform upgrades or repairs to parts of the local grid.

ACCIDENTS

Vehicles can crash into utility poles, bringing down power lines. Construction and excavation work can also result in disruptions to underground lines.

Everyone Has to Go Home Safe

At Little Ocmulgee EMC, nothing matters more than the safety and well-being of our community, our members and the families we serve. Recently, we were reminded just how quickly an ordinary day can turn dangerous when electricity is involved.

A serious car accident in a neighboring electric co-op's service area broke two utility poles on a three-phase power line. One of the poles snapped in half during the wreck, leaving the broken section dangerously low. Although the wires remained connected, the height of the line was reduced to just a few feet above the ground. Of the three high-voltage wires, only one phase tripped out, while the other two remained energized—creating a hidden but very real danger.

In the chaos of the moment, someone with good intentions jumped into action to try and help the person in the vehicle. At the same time, neighbors and passersby gathered nearby, some even leaning against a fence only a few feet from the lines. What no one could see was the very real danger in front of them. If that upright pole had shifted or



fallen, the fence could have carried the current, and anyone touching it might not have made it home that night.

We understand in a situation where every second feels crucial, it's natural to act quickly. But with downed power lines, what looks safe can still be deadly. Electricity doesn't always spark, smoke or give a warning. Lines can stay energized and silent, waiting for the slightest contact to send thousands of volts through anything—or anyone—nearby. That is why we ask you: **Please stay back and let trained line crews make the scene safe.**

We are grateful beyond words that no one was hurt in this accident. We also want to say how much we appreciate the kindness of those who step forward in emergencies. Many times, there are heroes among us who rise to the occasion. But the truth is, we want every single person—responders, neighbors and accident victims alike—to go home safely to their families. It is too grave a risk to take chances when power lines are involved.

An on-call lineman, who

lived close by, was able to reach the scene within 10 minutes. That quick response made a difference. But remember that our system stretches across five counties. Sometimes, it takes longer for crews to arrive. We know those minutes feel like an eternity, but please trust us in this: **We respond to every outage and every downed line as if a life is on the line.**

If you come upon an accident with power lines down:

- Call 911 immediately.
- Stay inside your vehicle if you are the one involved, unless there is fire.
- If you must exit, jump clear with both feet together and shuffle away without lifting your feet.
- Keep everyone else away from the accident and downed lines. Electricity can travel through the ground, fences or other objects, even if you don't see it. Your safety is worth more than any risk.

Electricity is powerful, unforgiving and invisible, but together we can make sure everyone goes home safely—no matter what.



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 away from downed power lines and call 911.



www.facebook.com/ESFi.org



www.x.com/ESFIdotorg



www.youtube.com/ESFIdotorg

Please share this free resource to save lives

Power Restoration, *Continued from page 18A*

friends and familiar community volunteers. They might even live on your street, so when you're without power, our people might be, too.

3. It's a team effort. A variety of Little Ocmulgee EMC employees are working to get your power restored as soon as possible. Our member services representatives are taking your calls, engineers and field staff are surveying damage, our vegetation management team is clearing hazards, dispatchers are organizing crews and communicators are keeping everyone informed of progress or potential dangers. When your power goes out, we all work together as quickly and safely as possible to get you back to normal.

4. We assess the situation first. Every outage is different, and we don't know how dangerous it is or what equipment might need to be replaced. When responding to outages, we first need to see what happened, then figure out what materials we need and a plan for how to fix the problem(s) without compromising electric flow for the rest of our members.

5. Our employees face many dangers. Besides working around

high-voltage electricity, our crews are on alert for wild animals, weather elements, falling trees and fast-moving cars. If you ever drive past one of our vehicles, please slow down.

6. Flickering lights are a good thing. Some folks mistake flickering lights for outages, but these blinks are important because they indicate our equipment works and prevents a possible outage likely caused by wayward animals or stray tree limbs on the lines.

7. You need a backup plan. We do our best to help those who need it, but if you depend on electricity for life support purposes, you must have a backup plan. We don't always know how long restoration efforts will take.

8. Our employees have to plan—and eat. If you ever see our trucks in a restaurant parking lot while your power is out, know that sometimes our employees huddle in a safe, common area to map out their plan for getting your power back on. Also, our crews work long, hard hours during outages and need to take time for meals just like everyone else. Though truth be told, many times they'd rather work through and only take breaks when strongly encouraged.

9. Our portion of the power

grid is connected to Georgia's Integrated Transmission System (ITS), a unique 17,800-mile network covering 90% of the state.

The ITS is the backbone of Georgia's transmission grid. If the outage is due to an issue on the transmission grid, we must often wait for it to be repaired before our employees can restore power to your home.

10. We do our best to avoid power disruptions, but they are inevitable from time to time. If the lights go out, know that your Little Ocmulgee EMC team is working as quickly and safely as possible to restore power.



If you experience an outage, please let us know by reporting it by calling us at (912) 568-7171 or (800) 342-1290. We are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Energy Efficiency *Tip of the Month*



Mid-winter is a great time to ensure you're making the most of your home heating system. Replace or clean filters to keep your furnace or heat pump running efficiently. Listen for strange noises and check for uneven heating—these signs indicate that the system may need servicing. Ensure vents and radiators aren't blocked by furniture or rugs as proper airflow helps your system work less and saves energy. A little maintenance along the way can prevent costly repairs and keep your home cozy through winter.

