



Along the LINE

October 2024

For members of
Edgecombe-Martin County EMC

Supporting Families: Join Our Drive for Aces for Autism

As the holiday season approaches, we are excited to announce our upcoming initiative: a donation drive to support Aces for Autism, running throughout November and December.

Last year, our blanket drive brought warmth and comfort to many in our community, and we were overwhelmed by the generous response. While we have supported our communities in various ways over the years—whether through food drives, blanket collections or other initiatives—this year, we are focusing our efforts on making a meaningful impact for families affected by autism.

Aces for Autism, located in Greenville, is a non-profit treatment and educational center dedicated to empowering families and individuals impacted by autism to experience success from diagnosis through adulthood. Their mission inspires us to lend a helping hand by collecting essential items like pull-ups, diapers, individual snacks and individual juices.

By participating in this drive, you can help us support Aces for Autism in their mission to empower families and individuals. We will be accepting



donations at our office throughout the months of November and December during normal business hours.

Together, let's make a difference in the lives of those impacted by autism in our community.

New Secure Pay Phone Number

As of Sept. 3, our Secure Pay number for paying bills over the phone has changed to **1-844-967-2463**. This updated number has been reflected on our website, social media, member handouts and magnets. If you have any questions or concerns about the change, please feel free to contact a member service representative at 252-823-2171.

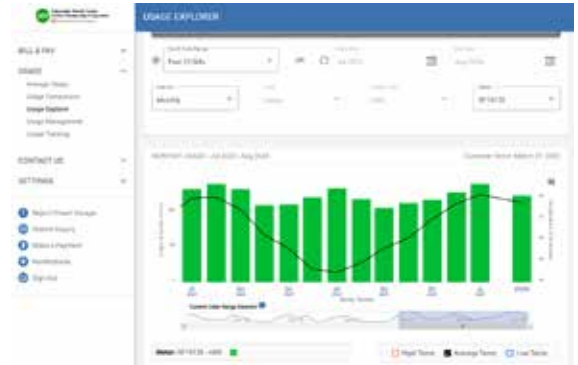
Download Data on SmartHub

Take control of your energy usage with SmartHub! Whether you're looking to monitor your daily consumption or download detailed reports for analysis, SmartHub offers flexible tools to help you manage your electricity usage efficiently.

Depending on your needs, you have several options for viewing and utilizing your energy data through SmartHub. These options are designed to provide you with detailed insights into your electricity usage, allowing you to monitor when and how much electricity you're using.

By regularly reviewing your energy consumption, you can identify potential issues before your bill arrives and create an energy efficiency plan tailored to your household.

Usage Data: Through SmartHub's "My Usage" button, you can access hourly and daily energy data. This feature offers tools to help you plan, save, and analyze your energy usage effectively.



Green Button Data: Green Button provides an additional way to review and download your energy data. You can download your Green Button data via your SmartHub account in any web browser. Simply navigate to the My Usage tab and click the "Green Button Download My Data" button. A popup will guide you to select your report criteria, and once chosen, you can click the "Download Usage Data" button. Your data will be downloaded in a zipped XML file format, which you can then extract for personal use or upload to any third-party site that supports Green Button data analysis.

High School Students: Apply for a Trip to Washington, D.C.

Edgecombe-Martin County EMC is now accepting applications for the 2025 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. One student will be selected for an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C., in June 2025.

The Electric Cooperative Youth Tour provides a unique and enriching experience for the selected student. As a representative of Edgecombe-Martin County EMC, the chosen delegate will join over 1,500 high school students from across the country.

This trip offers a valuable opportunity to learn about electric cooperatives, explore American history, and gain insight into the workings of the U.S. government. Participants will also have the chance to visit historic landmarks, meet with congressional leaders, and network with Youth Tour alumni who have gone on to roles as interns or staffers on Capitol Hill.

To be eligible, applicants must currently be juniors (rising seniors). For more information or to apply, please contact Monica Speight at 252-823-2171 or monicas@ememc.com.



*Hannah Clay,
Edgecombe-Martin County
EMC's 2024 Youth Tourist*

Over the past few months, Edgecombe-Martin County EMC has received numerous calls from members approached by solar companies about installing solar panels at their homes. As solar energy gains popularity, the market is attracting not only genuine businesses but also less-than-reputable ones eager to exploit consumers seeking to generate their own power.

While many solar companies are committed to successful installations, some can create significant problems. It's crucial to remember that connecting solar panels to the electric grid requires permission from your local electric utility. Solar energy, being intermittent, only generates power when the sun is shining. Therefore, even with solar panels installed, you'll need to stay connected to the electrical grid to ensure your home is powered when the panels aren't producing enough electricity.

Installing renewable energy sources involves more than selecting a contractor. It requires obtaining local permits and complying with various legal documents, electrical codes, and safety regulations. Additionally, your home's energy consumption patterns and the structural capability of your roof to support the panels are essential considerations.

Recent developments highlight the importance of vigilance. On Aug. 7, the U.S. Treasury Department issued an advisory noting a rise in consumer complaints related to rooftop solar installations. This advisory, part of new actions by the Treasury, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, and the Federal Trade Commission, underscores that such scams are illegal. These agencies, in partnership with the Department of Energy and the Department of Housing and Urban Development, are working to prevent predatory practices in the residential solar power sector.

There have been numerous stories of vendors promising rooftop panels that can power an entire home, only for the installation to fall short and the vendor to vanish. These issues are frequently

highlighted on social media, where ads for "low-cost" or "no-upfront-cost" solar programs often target low- and middle-income homeowners.

Before committing to a solar installation, it's wise to consult with an energy advisor at your local electric co-op. We are here to assist you and ensure you make informed decisions about your home's energy use. Obtaining quotes from multiple solar companies can help you find a competitive deal, and researching each vendor thoroughly by reading customer reviews is essential.

Be cautious of high-pressure sales tactics. If a solar vendor presents an offer that is only valid for a short time, consider it a red flag. Reputable companies understand that you need time to review proposals and make thoughtful decisions. Additionally, if an offer seems too good to be true, it probably is. Be wary of any vendor making unrealistic promises about what their solar panels can achieve.

When reviewing and signing a solar contract, ensure the language is clear and understandable. Any verbal or emailed promises should be included in the contract to avoid misunderstandings. Although there are legitimate financing options available that allow you to go solar with little or no upfront costs, it's crucial to proceed with caution and make the right choice for you and your family. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out to us, your trusted energy advisor.

Cooperatively Yours,
Winston Howell
Winston Howell

Oct. 9 - Member Appreciation Day

Edgecombe-Martin County EMC is thrilled to invite you to our annual Member Appreciation Day, a special event dedicated to expressing our heartfelt gratitude to our member-owners and celebrating the vital role of cooperatives in our communities.

This year, join us on Wednesday, Oct. 9, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. for an afternoon of fun, fellowship and fantastic treats. We'll be serving up delicious hot dogs and homemade ice cream as you mingle with our dedicated employees. Don't miss the chance to enter our drawing for credits on your light bill—just for attending!

This is also the perfect time to pick up your new 2025 calendars. It's a wonderful opportunity to get to know our team, enjoy great food, and be treated to a memorable day on us. We can't wait to see everyone there and celebrate together!



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Payments after office hours and on holidays can be made at the kiosk under the drive thru canopy, by calling our automated telephone service at 1-855-356-6358, placed in the night deposit box or you may choose to utilize the convenience of online bill-pay by logging on to ememc.com

October Rights-of-Way

In order to provide safe, reliable electrical service, we maintain the rights-of-way under and around our power lines.

We do this through rights-of-way and vegetation management. This requires pruning, removing and cutting vegetation to prevent interruption of your electric service.

Throughout October, Burford's Tree Service will utilize sky trim, bucket trucks, and bush hogging equipment in the Bethel service areas, including Highway 11, Roberson School Road, Blue Eyes Road, Highway 30, and various hotspots within the system.

