

Mitchell



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EMC

The news
you need to
know in
5 minutes!

CAMILLA, GEORGIA
www.mitchellemc.com

Stay Focused on *Safety* During Harvest

During harvest season, many farmers reap the benefits of advancement in agricultural technology. With the help of GPS auto-steer devices, farmers are able to decrease driver error and maximize productivity. Yet despite these advances, safety risks remain. To help farmers stay out of harm's way, Safe Electricity 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, map making, 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 Kyla Kruse, 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 that they do not need to be as aware of navigation issues. However, even while using a GPS with auto-steering, farm workers 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.

Regardless the technology used on the farm, 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 Mitchell EMC.

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, still 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 non-profit membership organization providing consumer safety and energy efficiency materials to more than 400 co-ops.

A Community Partner Since 1937



ALERT TODAY, ALIVE TOMORROW: HEADS UP FOR FARM SAFETY

Stay safe around downed power lines. Consider all lines, equipment and conductors to be live and dangerous.



If the vehicle is on fire, or you must exit for other safety reasons, follow these steps:

1. Jump clear of the vehicle. Do not let any part of your body or clothes touch the ground and the machinery at the same time.
2. Land with feet together and hop away in small steps to minimize the path of electric current and avoid electric shock.
3. Keep going until you are at least 40 ft. away.
4. Call for help. Make sure no one gets within 40 ft. of the downed line.
5. Do not re-enter the area or vehicle until emergency responders and your electric co-op crews determine it is safe.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



Heating your living space uses more energy than any other system in your home – typically making up about 42 percent of your utility bill. By combining proper equipment maintenance and upgrades with recommended insulation, air sealing and thermostat settings, you can save about 30 percent on your energy bill.

Source: energy.gov

You Get the Credit

Operation at cost is part of the cooperative difference

Electric cooperatives aren't like other utilities—you, as a consumer and a member own a portion of the business. And one benefit of that membership involves the allocation of excess revenue, called margins, in the form of patronage capital.

Electric co-ops operate at cost—collecting enough revenue to run and expand the business but with no need to raise rates to generate profits for distant shareholders. When Mitchell EMC has money left over, it's allocated back to you and other members as patronage capital. When the co-op's financial position permits, the co-op retires, or pays, the patronage capital to members in the form of a check or as a bill credit.

Over the years Mitchell EMC has retired \$14,999,239.26 in patronage capital to members. Nationally, in 2010, electric cooperatives retired \$626 million in patronage capital to current and former members. Since 1988, co-ops have retired \$9.5 billion, based on data from the federal Rural Utilities Service and the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC), the premier private market lender to electric cooperatives.

"Allocating and retiring excess revenue to members helps distinguish cooperatives," points out Tony Tucker, President and CEO. "We're proud to support our communities by putting money back into the local economy—and into the pockets of those we serve. It makes our business model special."

The retirement of patronage capital—so-called because members provide capital to the cooperative for it to operate and expand—depends on the co-op's financial status. Mitchell EMC holds onto allocated capital credits to cover emergencies, such as a natural disaster, and other unexpected events, and to expand its electric system, all of which may require large-scale construction of poles and wires. This action decreases the need to raise rates or borrow money to pay for the infrastructure. After a number of years, if financial conditions permit, Mitchell EMC may decide to retire a set amount of capital credits.

Consumer-members are annually allocated capital credits based on the amount of electricity they consumed during a year. For example, with Mitchell EMC in 2015, consumers can use the Cooperative Allocation Factor of 0.02147123 times the amount the consumer paid for energy in order to calculate their amount of patronage capital allocated during 2015.

"Margins earned from electric revenues are the only real source of equity for not-for-profit electric cooperatives," says Rich Larochelle, CFC senior vice president, corporate relations. "Investors in CFC look to the underlying financial strength of our member electric co-ops—and strong and consistent equity levels are one key aspect of financial strength. So it's essential for a co-op to maintain the right balance between retiring capital credits to members and retaining sufficient equity on its balance sheet."

He adds: "Co-ops do a good job of striking that balance. That contributes to CFC's ability to offer attractive rates on loans to co-ops, which in turn help co-ops keep costs low."

"Retiring capital credits is just one more way Mitchell EMC is looking out for you," emphasizes Tony Tucker, President and CEO.

Georgia Agricultural Tax Exemption Expires Dec. 31

If you're an agricultural producer and receive the Georgia Agricultural Tax Exemption (GATE) on electricity, you must renew it beginning this October.

GATE is an agricultural sales and use tax exemption certificate issued by the Georgia Department of Agriculture. The document identifies its user as a qualified farmer or producer who is exempt from sales tax on the inputs used in the production of their commodity.

Mitchell EMC member-owners who receive a GATE certificate should send us a copy along with the account numbers that apply to the GATE certificate, so we can apply the exemption to their account. We must receive a copy of the new certificate by December 31 for the exemption to continue.

Producers who have never received GATE can also apply and send a certificate copy to Mitchell EMC. Visit <https://forms.agr.georgia.gov/gate/> or call 855-FARM-TAX for more information, to renew or apply.

Mail GATE certificate copies to Mitchell EMC, Attention: Billing, P.O. Box 409, Camilla, GA 31730.

Serving in 14 Southwest Georgia Counties...



Join us in a Cover-Up!

Mitchell EMC will be collecting winter coats, good used and new, for the needy. If you can contribute, please bring your coats to any MEMC office or contact any MEMC employee. The coats will be distributed the first of December.

MITCHELL EMC'S OFFICES
WILL BE CLOSED ON
NOVEMBER 24TH AND
NOVEMBER 25TH.
WE WOULD LIKE TO WISH
ALL OF OUR MEMBERS A
HAPPY THANKSGIVING!



Note: If you move or no longer have electric service with Mitchell EMC, it is important that members keep their address current, so that future disbursements can be properly mailed. Capital credits are reserved for members even if they move out of the Mitchell EMC service area. Mitchell EMC will make a diligent effort to send a check by mail.

Statement of Equal Employment Opportunity

All applicants for employment shall be considered and hired on the basis of merit, without regard to race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), age, national origin, disability, genetic information, or past or present military status. The employment practices shall ensure equal treatment of all employees, without discrimination as to promotion, discharge, rates of pay, fringe benefits, job training, classification, referral, and other aspects of employment, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, disability, age, genetic information, or past or present military status. M/F/V/DV/D

WATT'S COOKING



Turkey Soup

Ingredients:

2 tablespoons margarine
2 cups diced onions
2 cups diced carrots
1 cup diced potatoes
1 cup green peas
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
4 packs chicken broth mix
7 cups of water
2 teaspoons dried basil
8 ounces shredded cooked turkey
3 ounces small pasta shells
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon ground red pepper

In a large saucepan, melt margarine; add onions, carrots, potatoes and green peas. Cook, stirring frequently, 4-5 minutes, until tender. Stir in flour, black pepper, and cook 1 minute longer. Stir in 7 cups of water, broth mix and basil; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low; stir in turkey, pasta, salt and red pepper. Cook stirring frequently, until pasta is cooked and soup is slightly thickened, about 10 minutes. Yields 4 servings.

Thanks!

to **Betty Lewis**,
Dougherty County, GA, for
sharing this recipe.

Share & Win!

Send us your favorite quick and easy dinner recipes. If your recipe is chosen for print, you can win a **\$25 credit** on your next Mitchell EMC bill.

Send recipes to Heather Greene, P.O. Box 409, Camilla, GA 31730 or email to heather.greene@mitchellemc.com.