

VOL. 55 NO. 12 • DECEMBER 2018

Mitchell
EMC



The news
you need to
know in
5 minutes!

CAMILLA, GEORGIA
www.mitchellemc.com



Mitchell EMC
wishes you and
your family
a very

Merry
Christmas

Plant Vogtle deal makes for a bright energy future

In 2007, when the price of natural gas was double or even triple what it is today, Mitchell EMC, through our wholesale energy provider, Oglethorpe Power Corporation, was actively seeking opportunities to acquire safe, reliable and affordable electric generation resources to assure your long-term power needs. Natural gas-fired generation was not a competitive option at that time.

Nuclear energy afforded the best large-scale value and a prime opportunity existed in our own backyard. Oglethorpe Power was already participating in active partnerships with other utilities in the state's existing nuclear facilities, namely Plants Vogtle and Hatch. Through our existing partnership, we were able to move forward with what would become the first new nuclear project in the U.S. in more than 30 years. Amid great optimism, and with all of the state's utilities as stakeholders, construction began on Plant Vogtle, units 3 and 4.

A cost-analysis at the time showed that Oglethorpe's original investment was a sound business decision that would pay for itself many times over in the decades ahead. The new Vogtle project would enhance our ability to provide, safe, reliable, carbon-free, baseload power – 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year – for 60-to-80 years while maintaining affordability in consumer energy costs.

As construction proceeded, costs began to grow, which was not ideal, but still in a range that was manageable.

Fast-forward ten years, in March of 2017 Westinghouse, the lead contractor building Units 3 and 4, filed for bankruptcy, leaving the power company partners to decide if they wished to continue with the project, and if so, how to proceed.

Southern Nuclear, a wholly owned subsidiary of Southern Company stepped in to lead a new

partnership with primary oversight of the project as its largest stakeholder. After providing what they deemed to be a thorough cost analysis, Oglethorpe's share of the total budget rose to more than \$7 billion.

Feeling that it could no longer treat the Vogtle project as a blank checkbook, Oglethorpe's board of directors strongly considered stepping away, which would have brought construction to a halt. However, the decision weighed heavily on Georgia's cooperatives because stopping the project would have meant that rural Georgians would have to pay over \$3.7 billion for costs incurred thus far with no tangible benefits to be realized. After much negotiation, Southern Company agreed to limit its partners' exposure to future cost increases, should they occur, and provide other cost-mitigating measures.

Oglethorpe evaluated its budget and determined that with further upside costs controlled, Plant Vogtle remains a very sound long-term investment and worthy of its continued support. As an EMC that receives wholesale electricity from Oglethorpe Power, we supported their position and were pleased with the outcome.

Nuclear energy is a low-cost, carbon-free and safe generation resource. It will complement our energy portfolio which includes a mix of traditional and alternative options that will assure when you flip the switch, your lights will come on.

Plant Vogtle Units 3 and 4 are scheduled to come online in 2021 and 2022, respectively. The units will generate enough emission-free electricity to power approximately 500,000 homes and businesses.

At Mitchell EMC we will continue to represent you, our members, by seeking opportunities to lower your monthly energy costs and provide reliable and safe electricity to support our area's growing families and prosperous business enterprises.



MERRY, BRIGHT AND EFFICIENT HOLIDAY LIGHTING

Decking the halls doesn't have to take a toll on your energy bill! Keep your holiday lighting merry, bright and energy efficient with LED light strands.

- Consider replacing older light strands with new ENERGY STAR LED® lights. LED strands are 70 percent more efficient and last 10 times longer than the average-old standard bulbs.
- You can get the look of cozy lighting with LEDs. Just look for "warm white" on the label.
- Unlike older light strands, LED lights give off virtually no heat, making them safer for kids and pets (and reindeer).
- Save energy by setting a timer for outdoor lighting and decorations. Program the timer so the lights turn on in the evening and turn off later at night when you typically go to sleep.

Source: Dept. of Energy

Electrical Safety Checklist

Nearly half of all home fires occur during winter months. Take a few minutes to identify and correct any potential electrical hazards to ensure the safety of your home.

SWITCHES AND OUTLETS

- **Are any switches or outlets warm to the touch?** YES NO
Warm switches or outlets indicate an unsafe wiring condition.
- **Are any outlets or switches discolored?** YES NO
Discoloration indicates dangerous heat buildup at these connections.
- **Do plugs fit snugly into outlets?** YES NO
Loose-fitting plugs can cause overheating and fires.



CORDS

- **Are any cords cracked, frayed or damaged?** YES NO
Damaged cords can expose wires, causing shock or fire hazard.
- **Are any cords pinched by furniture or windows, or attached to anything with staples or nails?** YES NO
Pinching and/or stapling cords can damage the insulation, causing shock or fire hazard.
- **Do you use extension cords on a permanent basis?** YES NO
Extension cords should only be used temporarily.

ELECTRIC PANEL

- **Do you have recurring tripped circuit breakers or blown fuses?** YES NO
If yes, this could indicate you're exceeding a safe level of electrical current.
- **Do you have arc fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs)?** YES NO
AFCIs provide greater fire protection. Check your circuit breakers for the AFCI label.

Please note this is not a comprehensive safety checklist. Visit ESFI.org for more information. Source: ESFI

Serving in 14 Southwest Georgia Counties...



Georgia Agricultural Tax Exemption Expires December 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, Attn: Billing Department P.O. Box 409, Camilla, GA, 31730.



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 offices will be closed on Dec. 24th & 25th in observance of Christmas and Jan. 1st for New Years.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Heading out of town for the holidays? Remember to unplug electronics that draw a phantom energy load. Some gadgets, like TVs, gaming consoles, chargers and DVD players use energy when plugged into an outlet, even when they're not in use.

Source: energy.gov



Santa Claus Pictures will be rescheduled. Date will be announced.

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



Smothered Green Beans

Ingredients:

- 5 (15-oz) cans green beans, drained
- 1 lb. bacon
- 2/3 cup brown sugar
- 1/4 cup butter, melted
- 1/4 cup low-sodium soy sauce
- 1-1/2 tsp. garlic powder

Preheat oven to 350°. Pour drained green beans in an ungreased 9x13-inch pan. In a large skillet, cook bacon until almost done, but not too crispy. Remove from skillet, drain on paper towel and chop. Sprinkle cooked bacon on top of green beans. Whisk together brown sugar, melted butter, soy sauce and garlic powder. Pour over green beans. Bake for 40 minutes.

Thanks!

to

Patsy Hancock,

Mitchell 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.