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you need to
know in
5 minutes!

CAMILLA, GEORGIA
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Serving Up Savings

By **Tony Tucker**, *President & CEO Mitchell EMC*

The holiday season is just around the corner and soon, festive music will flood the airwaves, sparkling lights and decorations will adorn homes and businesses, and good tidings will abound.

The holidays also bring a frenzy of decorating, cooking and family gatherings, and amid the hectic hustle and bustle, you may receive higher-than-usual energy bills.

Keeping this in mind, I thought this month would be a good time to remind Mitchell EMC members of a few programs and efficiency tips to help lower your monthly energy use.

Programs designed to help you save.

Winter months typically bring some of the highest energy bills of the year. Making minor, low-cost improvements, like weatherstripping exterior doors and caulking around old, drafty windows can make a positive impact on energy bills. If you're not sure where to start, contact Mitchell EMC to schedule a free home energy audit.

Our team of member service representatives is available to help, so I encourage you to give us a call if you'd like to learn about specific programs and services that can lower your bills.

Be festive without breaking the bank.

My wife insists that I bring the Christmas decorations down from the attic faster than we can finish the Thanksgiving turkey. With holiday lights adorning our home for well over a month, we decided to make the switch to LEDs to save energy.

LED holiday lights use 88% less energy than incandescent holiday lights. To put that into perspective, the Department of Energy estimates that with standard holiday decorations, LED lights typically increase energy bills by about \$5 to \$7. But with incandescent lights, energy bills will typically increase by \$33 or more. For homes that go above and beyond with incandescent holiday lighting (think Clark Griswold), energy bills could increase by as much as \$350. Beyond energy

savings, LEDs provide additional benefits, such as being shock-resistant, shatterproof and cool to the touch, making them safer for the home.

You can also lower energy use by conveniently managing holiday lighting. Smart light timers can help you save energy by connecting to a smart phone app or voice assistant to program lights to turn on and off at set times. If you don't use smart home technology, you can still save energy by using traditional timers.

Additional easy ways to save during the holiday season include turning off overhead lights and using your Christmas tree to illuminate your home. If you have a fireplace, remember to close the flue when you're not burning a fire to ensure heat doesn't escape through the chimney.

Cook up energy savings in the kitchen.

If you plan to have family and friends over this holiday season, you can cook up energy savings by using small countertop appliances like microwaves, air fryers and slow cookers when possible, as they use much less energy than the stovetop or oven.

When using the oven, bake multiple dishes at once for maximum efficiency. After all, it takes as much energy to cook one dish as it does to cook several. Turn the oven off a few minutes before the recipe's end time and allow the residual heat to finish baking the dish. Once the food is done, leave the stove door ajar to allow the residual heat to warm the room. When using the stove top, match the pan size to the burner to maximize the stove top's efficiency.

I hope a few of these tips will be helpful as we approach the holiday season. Remember, we're here to answer any questions you have about managing energy use or your monthly bills. With a little planning upfront, you can find efficient ways to save on everything from holiday décor to your favorite soup recipes.

From your friends at Mitchell EMC, we hope you have a wonderful holiday season.



A Lineworker's Timeline: Restoring a Power Outage

“How long is it going to take?” Those are familiar words to all who work in the electric industry. It's a phrase I've been asked thousands of times in my career. I've been asked by phone, through car windows, from front porches, sidewalks, bicycles, gas pumps, diners. I'm pretty sure I've even been asked by children in car seats. It's the first thing people think when the lights go out. It doesn't take long sitting in the dark to realize how dependent we are on electricity. How much it makes our lives better and easier.

As a lineworker, it's always a good feeling to help people get those lights back on. I can remember times when I've been on storm or extended outages re-energizing neighborhoods and heard people in their homes cheering as their lights came on for the first time in days. No matter how tired I am or how long I've been working, that feeling will always make it worthwhile.

But what does it take to get those lights back on? Why does it sometimes take so long? Most people will never get to experience or witness the work that goes into ending outages. Hopefully after reading this, you will have a better understanding of the process and the work that Mitchell EMC line crews are doing to restore your power.

The electricity you use travels a great distance and goes through several steps to get to your home. It starts with a power plant. Power plants use fuel to produce power. That fuel could be natural gas, diesel, coal, hydro, wind, solar or nuclear. A power plant typically produces voltages of less than 30,000 volts. That voltage needs to be “stepped up” so it can travel long distances. That process starts next door in the power plant's substation and switchyard. In the substation, a transformer will step the voltage up to 345,000 volts, or sometimes higher, and send it out on transmission lines to another substation.

At the next substation, electricity starts to get closer to its destination. Here we start stepping the voltage down. In this second substation, a transformer will step the voltage down to 69,000 volts and send it out to smaller local substations.

These local substations are the final substation before the electricity reaches your home. Here it is stepped down, again with a transformer, to the 7,200 or 14,400 volts that can then be delivered to the poles outside your home. Once it arrives outside your home, it is stepped down a final time, yes, by another transformer. This final transformer will step the voltage down to 120/240 volts that operate all the devices that power your life.

What I just described is hundreds of miles of line and thousands of poles. That's a lot of exposure for something to happen and cause an outage. Just like your home, our system has breakers. Our breakers help us reduce the exposure of the line and allow us to split our system into sections. Doing so helps limit the size of the outages and allows us to keep as many people on as possible. Breakers also help to protect equipment on the line. Ever wonder why your lights blink a few times before going off? That's the breaker. They operate a few times trying to give the fault a chance to clear the line before they open for good.

Now that the lights have blinked, your breaker has opened, and the power is off. So what happens?

The Outage Begins:

6:35 p.m.: Your local lineworker gets a phone call.

When I answer the phone, I'm told that we have an outage. My first question is, “Is this an individual or a line outage?” A line outage will be a large section of line and several people. An individual will be just a single transformer or pole. If it's a line outage, my next question is, “What's the lowest pole number?” This is why it's important to report your outage. It verifies the outage, and it helps the

lineworker decide where to go. So, if I'm told the lowest reported outage is at pole 135, I'm mentally sectionalizing the line in my head. I know that there is a set of breakers at pole 100. So, if the lowest member to call in is at pole 135 that tells me that most likely the breaker at pole 100 is open and whatever caused the outage is past pole 100. So, pole 100 is where I'm heading.

Heading toward the outage:

7 p.m. The drive

An after-hours outage requires your lineworker to respond from home. Depending on where the outage is, the drive alone can sometimes take an hour.

7:45 p.m. Arrival and line inspection

I often see people outside when their power is off, sitting on their porch or working in the yard. Sometimes I drive by several times. I often wonder what they are thinking when they see me driving by multiple times. Do they think I'm just driving around? Do they wonder why I'm not getting their power back on? But that's exactly what I'm doing. The first time you see me I'm most likely driving to the breaker. I need to go to the breaker to verify that it's open. The second time you see me drive by I'm visually checking the line for what may have caused the outage. **Checking the line can take some time. It's one of the more time-consuming steps we take, but also one of the most important parts of restoring an outage.** We can't just simply flip a switch and restore the power. That can be dangerous for many reasons. The outage could be a line down in someone's yard, or it could have been caused by equipment failure. Re-energizing the line under those two examples would be very dangerous to the public and could cause more damage and just extend the outage longer. So, it's very important to visually check the line before trying the breaker. Several things can cause an outage. A few examples of things I'm looking for are fallen trees, tree limbs, old line repairs that have failed, car accidents, lightning, animals and equipment failure.

Another factor that can add time to inspecting the line is terrain. We try to put poles along the road, but that can't always be accomplished. Electric co-op lines go where they are needed, and that might be in extremely remote places. While poles and lines that run along the road can be inspected and repaired faster, terrain and direction of the line sometimes require us to run the line offroad. If it's not along the road, the line must be checked on foot. If it's dark that can make this job even more difficult and time consuming regardless of where it's located.

The Process of Repairs:

8:30 p.m. Outage cause located, but first safety.

Once we find the cause of the outage, there are safety steps that must be taken before we can start the work. **These safety procedures add time, but they are vital.** It's how we survive in a dangerous job. It's how we ensure lineworkers are protected and everyone goes home to their families. The most important thing we have to do is isolate and ground the line. This is an important step for many reasons. One reason is to protect from back feed. Lineworkers always try to be aware of their surroundings. An important thing to listen for and to be aware of are home generators. The transformer on your pole that drops the voltage down can also work in reverse. Your home generator, if installed wrong, could back feed through your transformer and put primary voltage back on the line. To protect lineworkers, we install grounds as close to the work location as we can on both sides of the work. These grounds connect the neutral wire to all primary wires making them all the same ‘grounded potential’ and safe to work on. The final safety step is the briefing. During the safety briefing, the job plan is discussed and explained, hazards are identified, and

everyone is made aware of the grounds, their location and the location of the breaker.

9 p.m. All safety procedures are in place. We can begin the work.

Let's say for this outage it was a tree. A 50-foot-tall oak tree fell through the line. It's off the road, but we got lucky—it broke a crossarm, but the pole is good. The wire isn't broken either but is currently under the oak tree. We've got to chop the tree and free the wire. This will take some time. Anyone who has cut up a downed tree will understand the danger. You have to be careful and pay attention to the tree and how it's sitting on the ground. Downed trees can shift, and roll while being cut. And here you also have power lines under tension, pinned down by the tree adding an extra layer of danger. Special care and awareness must be used to remove this tree. Sometimes the power lines must be tied down, so that they can be let up in a more controlled manner once the tree is cut. While we work to clear the tree from the line, new material is on the way. We are going to need a crossarm, crossarm braces, new insulators, bolts and ties to tie in the wire.

10:30 p.m. The tree has been cleared and the material has arrived.

As I mentioned, the pole is off the road, so that means we can't get a bucket truck to it. We will have to climb the pole. One of our lineworkers will put on his belt and hooks and climb to the top of the pole. He'll bring all the tools he'll need with him. One thing he will take with him is a handline. It's a rope in a pulley that's long enough to go from the top of the pole to the ground in a loop. This will be used to lift material and other objects to the lineworker that were too heavy or awkward to take up in his belt. Once he gets to the top of the pole, he will get to work. He'll start by removing all the broken material. He'll also inspect the top of the pole for damage we couldn't see from the ground. Once he has it cleaned up, we will start sending up material on the handline. He should have taken the crossarm bolt with him when he climbed and installed that in the pole. The lineworker on the ground should have already put everything on the crossarm. Next, the lineworker on the ground will tie the crossarm onto the handline in a way that will allow the lineworker on the pole to just guide the arm onto the bolt as it's being lifted up. Once the new crossarm is on the pole and all the bolts are tightened the wire will

be lifted up, also with the handline, and placed on the arm. The wire ties will be sent up, again on the handline, and the lineworker will tie in the wire. After completing all the work in the air, the lineworker will send down the handline and climb down. Once down, he'll remove his belt and hooks and pack them away. The lineworker on the ground will now be "making up the handline" which means he is getting it ready to store until it's needed again. We'll all carry the tools that we used back to the truck and get them packed away. Lastly, we will remove our grounds.

11:45 p.m. Repairs complete

Now if you still happen to be on your porch, you will see me drive by a third time. This is good news because you are about to get your power restored. I'm heading for the breaker. Once I get to the breaker, I'll call dispatch and get clearance to re-energize. I'll let them know who is with me and if they are in the clear. They will check to make sure no one else is working on the line and then give me clearance to try the breaker. At this time, I will close the breaker and your power will be restored.

12:05 a.m. Power restored. Outage over

Keep in mind this is just one scenario; not every outage is the same. Each outage varies in time for restoration. This example outage took around five and a half hours to restore. If the tree had broken a pole, it would have been even longer.

1 a.m. Lineworker returns home, safe and sound.

We work for you, our neighbors.

We've become so dependent on electricity that every outage, whether it is a short outage or an extended one, can be stressful for those without power. The longer outages last, the more stressful and irritating it can become. I hope that I've provided a better understanding of the restoration process so you have an idea what's happening while you wait. Just know that your co-op line crews are doing their best to get the lights back on as quickly and safely as possible.

Mitchell EMC and its employees are members of your community. We live in the same neighborhoods. We shop at the same stores. Our kids go to the same schools. If your lights are off, there is a good chance ours are off too. **We will always be committed to serving our members and communities by providing safe and reliable electricity—24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.**

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 sale 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.



VETERANS DAY

This Veterans Day, we stand united in gratitude for the brave men and women who have selflessly served our country.

Don't forget to set your clocks back one hour!

November 5

Fall Back

Happy Thanksgiving

From our table to yours, Mitchell EMC wishes you and yours a Happy Thanksgiving. We're grateful for our members and the opportunity to power your life. Our offices will be closed on November 23 & 24.

Five Ways to Safeguard Your Home This Winter

By Abby Berry



As the temperatures drop and the days grow shorter, there's a natural inclination to create a warm and cozy haven at home. Unfortunately, as we see increased use of heating equipment, candles and electrical items, the number of home fires tends to increase during winter months.

Here are five ways you can safeguard your home for the winter season.

1. Ensure carbon monoxide and smoke detectors are working properly. If your detectors are battery-operated, replace the batteries annually. Test the detectors once a month and give them a good dusting to ensure the sensors are clear of dirt and debris.

2. Inspect electrical cords. We depend on more cords during winter, whether for holiday lighting, extension cords or portable heaters. Before using any corded items, double check to make sure cords aren't frayed or cracked. If you use portable space heaters, remember to keep them at least 3 feet away from flammable items. Use models that include an auto shut-off feature and overheat protection. Space heaters can take a toll on your energy bills. Use them efficiently (to heat smaller spaces) and safely. Never plug a space heater into a power strip. Speaking of power strips...

3. Avoid overloading electrical outlets and power strips. When overloaded with electrical items, outlets and power strips can overheat and catch fire. If you use power strips for multiple devices, make sure the strip can handle the electrical load. For a safer bet, look for power strips that include surge protection.

4. Clean the fireplace to improve safety and efficiency. There's nothing better than a warm fire on a chilly night, but it's important to maintain your fireplace for safety. As wood burns, a sticky substance known as creosote builds up in the chimney. When creosote buildup becomes too thick, a chimney fire can ignite. The chimney should be cleaned at least once a year to reduce fire risks. Regular cleaning also improves air flow and limits the amount of carbon monoxide that seeps indoors.

5. Practice safety in the kitchen. As we spend more time in the kitchen during the holiday season, be mindful of potential fire hazards. Never leave food that's cooking on the stovetop unattended. Clean and remove spilled foods from cooking surfaces and be mindful of where you place flammable items like dish towels.

Mitchell EMC wants you and your family to stay safe during the winter season. Visit www.mitchellemc.com for additional safety tips.

Abby Berry writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56% of the nation's landscape.

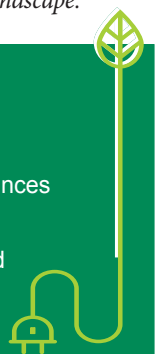


Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

The holiday season is upon us, and that means we'll be using more energy in the kitchen. When possible, cook with smaller countertop appliances instead of the stovetop or oven. Smaller appliances like slow cookers, air fryers and Instant Pots consume less energy.

When using the oven or stovetop, match the size of the pot to the heating element and place a lid over the pot while cooking. The food will cook faster, and you'll use less energy.

Source: Dept. of Energy



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 applications 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



Spiced Cranberry Mold

Ingredients

2 cups fresh or unfrozen frozen cranberries
(from 1 [10-oz.] pkg.)
½ cup granulated sugar
¼ teaspoon kosher salt
¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
¼ teaspoon ground cloves
¼ teaspoon ground ginger
1 cup apple juice
1 (1/4-oz.) envelope unflavored gelatin

Directions

Place cranberries, sugar, salt, cinnamon, cloves, and ginger in a saucepan, and bring to a boil over medium-high, stirring often. Boil, stirring often, until mixture is syrupy and cranberries have released their juices but still have most of their shape, about 10 minutes. Meanwhile, pour apple juice into a small bowl. Sprinkle with gelatin; let stand 5 to 10 minutes. Remove cranberry mixture from heat. Whisk ½ cup hot cranberry mixture into apple juice mixture until gelatin is dissolved. Whisk apple juice mixture into remaining cranberry mixture in saucepan, stirring to lightly break down some cranberries. Coat inside of a 2- to 3-cup mold or ramekin with cooking spray. Pour cranberry mixture into prepared mold. Cool at room temperature about 1 hour. Cover loosely; chill until set, at least 8 hours. Place mold in a shallow bowl of warm water for 1 minute. Run an offset spatula or a paring knife around edges of mold; invert cranberry sauce onto a plate before serving. Store, covered, in refrigerator up to 1 week.

Submitted by:

southernliving.com/recipes/spiced-cranberry-mold

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.