



Why Electric Co-ops Replace Utility Poles

By Abby Berry

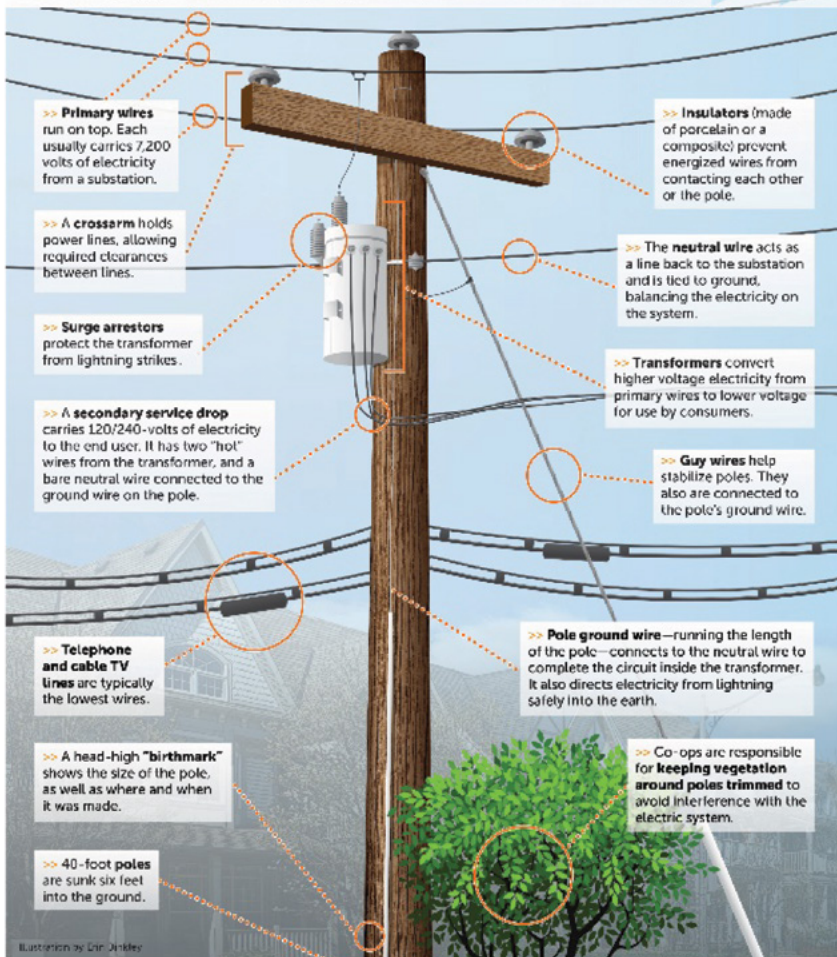
You probably don't pay much attention to the utility poles found throughout Mitchell EMC's service territory, but did you know these tall structures are the backbone of our distribution network?

Strong, sturdy utility poles ensure a reliable electric system, which is why we routinely inspect the thousands of poles found on our lines. Throughout the year, our crews check poles for decay caused by exposure to the elements. They know which poles are oldest and conduct inspections through a rotational process. Typically, a standard wooden distribution pole is expected to last more than 50 years.

Occasionally, poles need to be replaced for other reasons besides decay and old age. Weather disasters, power line relocation and car crashes are potential causes for immediate replacement. When possible, Mitchell EMC communicates when and where pole replacements will take place so that you stay informed of where crews will be working.

>> What's on that pole?

This illustration shows basic equipment found on electric power distribution poles. Not all poles have all this equipment on them. They vary according to location and the service they provide.



Here is a quick breakdown of how crews replace a utility pole:

When a pole needs to be replaced, crews will start the process by digging a hole, typically next to the pole being replaced. The depth of the hole must be 15 percent of the new pole's height. Next, the new pole must be fitted with bolts, cross arms, insulators, ground wires and arm braces – all of the necessary parts for delivering safe and reliable electricity. Then, crews safely detach the power lines from the old pole. The new pole is then raised and guided carefully into position, and the lines are attached, leaving the new pole to do its job.

So, the next time you come across a Mitchell EMC crew replacing a pole, use caution and know that this process ensures a more reliable electric system for you, our members.

Abby Berry writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

GA 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 in 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.

Patronage Capital Refund

The Board of Directors of Mitchell Electric Membership Corporation is pleased to announce the refund of patronage capital for the year 1984. Since you were a member of Mitchell EMC during this period, you are receiving this check for patronage capital allocated to your account for that year.

As a member of Mitchell EMC, you are also an owner of the cooperative. The patronage capital (also called margins) represents equity or working capital and your ownership interest. The margins are utilized in place of borrowed monies for a period of time to insure the financial stability of the cooperative and then returned to you in the form of a patronage capital refund. By borrowing less money and incurring less interest, Mitchell EMC saves money for its membership. The margins remaining after operating expenses are assigned to your account annually as patronage capital.

The retirement of patronage capital is just one of the unique benefits of being a member. As a member, you are a vital part of your cooperative and Mitchell EMC is proud to serve you.



Mitchell EMC Facilities Charge Adjustment

Currently, some of the fixed costs of servicing your account are recovered through what you pay for electricity. We are moving to more accurately allocate these costs, both fixed and energy, to their true sources. Effective with member billings that begin on January 1, Mitchell EMC's Facilities Charge will increase by \$3.00 per month. The rate structure for all outdoor lights has changed as well. The traditional outdoor light will increase by \$1.00 per month.

The Facilities Charge partially covers the fixed costs of delivering your electric service. These fixed costs include reading your meter; maintaining the electric distribution system used in keeping your power flowing; maintaining rights of way; and performing other tasks necessary to ensure a

reliable electric distribution system. The Facilities Charge **does not** include the cost of the actual electricity you use. The monthly Facilities Charge is changing because the costs of servicing your account are rising. Every member benefits from these services, so the monthly Facilities Charge helps Mitchell EMC ensure that the cost are spread fairly among our membership.

We continue to offer free in home energy audits to help members with options to make their homes more energy efficient. Our energy efficiency program includes rebates whether you are building a home, or just upgrading your present home.

To find out more about these rebates visit <https://mitchellemc.com/customer-service/consumer-rebates>.

Mitchell EMC will be closed on
November 26th and November 27th
in observance of Thanksgiving.
We will reopen on November 30th.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



Reduce energy for water heating. Take simple steps like lowering your water heater's temperature and installing low-flow showerheads to reduce your water heating bills.

Source: energy.gov

Serving in 14 Southwest Georgia Counties...

Donate your unwanted coats and help others stay warm this winter!

Coat Cover-up

November 1st -December 1st
New or Used
All sizes accepted

Drop-off bins are located in the lobby of each Mitchell EMC Office



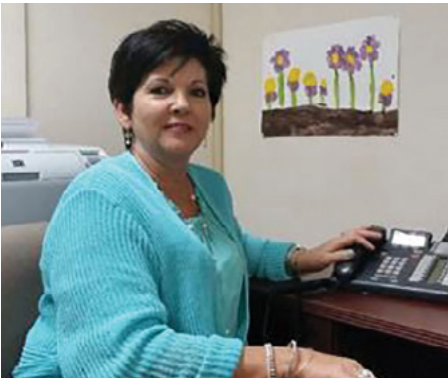
Employee SPOTLIGHT

Kellie White is Mitchell EMC's November Employee Spotlight. Kellie is the Consumer Projects Coordinator, and has been employed with MEMC for 35 years.

When I was a Junior in high school, I worked at Mitchell EMC as a file clerk after school. I knew then I wanted to be a part of that kind of work atmosphere. Four years later, I was knocking on their door, wanting a full-time job. I didn't know it at the time, but that was one of the best decisions I have ever made. There've been lots of changes, of course. One major change was from customers reading their own meters and mailing the reading in with their payments,

to technology that reads the meters from our office. Who would have guessed?!!

I enjoy being a part of a committed and dedicated team of employees who value the concept of a cooperative and serving its members. Our linemen work long hours, in all kinds of weather, in a very dangerous line of work. And if you ask them, they will tell you they love their job! Many of our customers only see our Customer Service Department once a month, if that. Customer Service is a big part of our cooperative, but we do more than just credit your account, and supply electricity. We are very fortunate to be able to offer our customers other programs, including Exede internet service, free home energy audits, and rebates on new constructions. We are here for our members, to help them any way we can.



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



Cranberry Crunch

2 cups fresh cranberries
1/3 cup sugar
1/2 cup chopped walnuts
1 egg well beaten
1/2 cup plain flour
1/4 cup melted butter

Beat egg well and gradually add sugar. Beat until foamy. Add flour and butter, then pour over cranberries. Bake at 325° for 40-45 minutes.

Thanks!

to **Wileen Franks**,
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.