

Mitchell EMC



The news
you need to
know in
5 minutes!

CAMILLA, GEORGIA
www.mitchellemc.com

Farm Bill Update

By Dan Riedinger

Every five years, the U.S. Congress considers the Farm Bill, a bill that has huge implications for America's electric cooperatives, including Mitchell EMC. The bill sets food and agriculture policy for the entire nation, affecting everything from what crops are grown to funding for food nutrition programs. The Farm Bill is due to be reauthorized by the federal government this year.

The Farm Bill is about much more than agriculture policy. It promotes rural economic development and allows co-ops to finance basic electrification activities, deploy high-speed communications and enhance smart grid technologies. Through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), our na-

tional service organization, America's electric cooperatives are working to ensure lawmakers in Washington know what our priorities are for the 2018 Farm Bill. Here are a few.

Rural broadband

Increasing high-speed internet access in rural communities is a priority for many co-ops. Broadband access isn't a luxury—it's a necessity. But 34 million Americans in mostly rural areas lack access to high speed internet. So, co-ops have asked Congress to use the Farm Bill to provide significant funding for broadband loans and grants to all viable Internet providers, including cooperatives.

Economic development

Co-ops aren't just electricity providers. They are engines of

economic development - powering and empowering the communities they serve. The Farm Bill's Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program is an important source of financing for economic development projects in rural communities. Over the last two decades, electric cooperatives have partnered with community stakeholders

(See *UPDATE*, Page 2.)



Know What's Below: Call Before You Dig

Whether it's a dreamed up deck addition or a landscaping master-piece, summer weather is a great time for outdoor improvement plans to actually play out.

But if your planned projects include digging, like planting a tree or bringing in a backhoe for trench work, you'll have to wait a few more days so the job can be done safely. Underground utilities, such as buried gas, water, and electric lines, can be a shovel thrust away from turning a summer project



into a disaster.

To find out where utility lines run on your property, dial 811 from anywhere in the country a few days prior to digging. Your call will be routed to a local "one call" center. Tell the operator where you're planning to dig and what type of work you will be doing, and affected local utilities will be notified.

In a few days, a locator will arrive to designate the approximate location of any underground lines, pipes, and cables with flags or marking paint so you'll know what's below. Then the safe digging can begin.

Although many homeowners tackling do-it-yourself digging projects are aware of "Call Before You Dig" services, the majority don't take advantage of the service. A national survey showed that only 33 percent of homeowners called to have their lines marked before starting digging projects, according

to the Common Ground Alliance, a federally mandated group of underground utility and damage prevention industry professionals.

Although light gardening typically doesn't call for deep digging, other seemingly simple tasks like planting shrubs or installing a new mailbox post can damage utility lines. A severed line can disrupt service to an entire neighborhood, harm diggers, and potentially result in fines and repair costs.

Never assume the location or depth of underground utility lines. There's no need: the 811 service is free, prevents the inconvenience of having utilities interrupted, and can help you avoid serious injury. For more information about local services, visit www.call811.com.

Sources: Common Ground Alliance, SafeElectricity.org

UPDATE from front

on hundreds of projects to renovate hospitals, build libraries and expand businesses. Co-ops have asked Congress to ensure ample funding for this program in the next Farm Bill and beyond.

Innovation

Not-for-profit electric co-ops are natural incubators of innovation, because they are driven solely by the needs of members like you. The USDA runs a number programs that help fund innovative projects, including the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) and Rural Energy Savings Program (RESP). Co-ops use these programs

to save members money by financing investments in energy efficiency, constructing new renewable energy resources and deploying electric grid modernization technologies. REAP and RESP help ensure that co-ops are poised to meet the evolving needs of their members.

USDA Rural Development

The health of our nation is dependent on a healthy rural America. Rural America grows most of the food, generates much of the power and manufactures many of the goods consumed by the nation. USDA's office of Rural Development operates many different programs

that provide fundamental assistance to those rural communities. Co-ops have asked Congress to maintain a strong rural development in the Farm Bill to reaffirm the importance of these programs.

We look forward to working with Congress and other stakeholders to pass a Farm Bill that promotes economic growth in rural America and allows co-ops to continue meeting the needs of their members.

Dan Riedinger 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.

The Value of Electricity Continues to Shine

By Derrill Holly

How many of us remember dropping into a Mitchell EMC office with our parents and grandparents to pay the light bill? Whether you do that in person, by mail or online today, paying your monthly bill does a lot more than just keep the lights on.

Electricity keeps us connected to our modern world. Consider all the necessities and conveniences we enjoy in part because of the power lines running to the electric meter outside your home.

Count up your televisions, desktop, laptop and tablet computers, printers, your gaming consoles, music and video players and personal assistant devices. Whether they get used every day or just occasionally, the electricity that keeps them working comes from Mitchell EMC.

Have you looked around your kitchen lately? Between the coffee maker and toaster and the microwave and electric skillet, a lot of us have added several other modern small appliances.

If you've got a craft nook or workshop, the power tools and machines you use to cut and shape your projects are either plugged in or recharged from the outlets connecting your household wiring to Mitchell EMC.

You use electricity to run all these devices, and we still keep the lights on, use the stove, heating and air conditioning, and get hot water from tap. The good news is, even as we rely more on electricity, it's still a bargain, especially compared to other things we pay for regularly.

Since 2011, medical care, residential rental rates and education have increased at rates of 3 percent or more per year. Butter, meat and egg costs have been up by more than one to 2 percent annually, and even bread costs have risen better than a half point on average.

Electricity costs rise about 1 percent a year, but co-ops across the country have reported a decline in average residential use per household since 2010. That means we're doing more things with less energy.

Kilowatt hour use per household dropped by 8 percent between 2010 and 2016, slightly less than the 9 percent decline reported by all electric utilities, nationwide.

When it comes to value, electricity is a clear winner, and we're always looking for ways to work with you to make it even better. That's why Mitchell EMC urges energy efficiency, encourages you to look for ENERGY STAR® appliances, and promotes technology, designed to give members more control over their electricity use.

Energy performance dashboards, smart thermostats and power strips, and appliance settings that shift most water heating, laundry and dishwashing outside of peak rate periods help reduce the co-op's overall power demand. They also give you opportunities to control or even trim your monthly utility bills.

That's good for families, couples and individuals trying to live within their budgets. And it's going to become even more important as digital devices and internet-connected technologies become even more important in our lives.

The average home now has 10 Wi-Fi connected devices. That number is expected to explode to 50 by 2020. Technology and the gateways that keep it working use electricity, so you'll depend upon Mitchell EMC for more than the power that keeps the lights on.

That's why we're always working to provide service that's reliable, keep it affordable, and make it even more valuable to our member— you, your family and your neighbors.

Derrill Holly writes on cooperative issues 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.

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

Don't forget to spring
forward on **March 11!**
Set your clocks ahead
by one hour.



Serving in 14 Southwest Georgia Counties...

Mitchell Electric Membership Corporation

81st Annual Meeting

April 20, 2018

Mitchell EMC Auditorium • 475 Cairo Road, Camilla, GA 31730

Registration 12:30 - 2:00 p.m.

Information Booths 12:30 - 2:00 p.m.

Entertainment 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.

Business Meeting 2:00 p.m.

FREE GIFTS to the
first 500 consumers
to register



Entertainment
will be provided
by The Bowling
Family from
1:00 - 2:00 p.m.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Consider insulating your hot water pipes. Doing so can reduce heat loss, allow you to lower the temperature setting and save an additional 3 to 4 percent per year on water heating.

Source: energy.gov



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



Parmesan & Herb Pasta

Ingredients:

8 ounces spaghetti or pasta of your choice
½ cup of parmesan
1 teaspoon of parsley
1 teaspoon of oregano
1 tablespoon of olive oil
1 teaspoon sea salt

Bring a large pot of salted water to boil. (1 tablespoon for every 2 quarts of water). Mix parsley, oregano, sea salt and olive oil well. Cook pasta for about 10 minutes (if using angel hair pasta cook 3 to 4 minutes). Drain the pasta really well. Immediately transfer pasta to a heat resistant container. Pour the mixture over the pasta and gently toss to combine. Sprinkle with parmesan cheese.

Thanks!

to

Tyrone Robinson, 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.