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you need to  
know in  
5 minutes!

CAMILLA, GEORGIA  
[www.mitchellemc.com](http://www.mitchellemc.com)

## Safety Above All Else

By Anne Prince

“Safety” is a universal word that is mentioned often and used loosely. Communities large and small as well as companies across all industries are committed to safety. Sports leagues, at every level, take safety seriously. Unfortunately, when it really counts, steps to keep the public, workers, athletes and loved ones safe are often ignored in the interest of expediency or convenience.

However, safety is a serious issue, especially when it comes to electrical safety. For, Mitchell EMC, it's the number one priority. This is not empty talk. Over time, Mitchell EMC has created a culture of safety by putting our employees' safety and that of the community above all else. At its essence, Mitchell EMC's mission is to provide *safe, affordable and reliable* electricity to its member-owners. At the end of the day, we strive to deliver affordable and reliable electricity to our member-owners, but equally important, we want to return our workers home safely to their loved ones. To do this requires ongoing focus, dedication and vigilance.

### Following leading national safety standards

Working with electricity is an inherently dangerous job, especially for lineworkers. Mitchell EMC has a safety team whose focus is keeping employees and the community safe around electricity. We established and follow safety protocols based on leading national safety practices for the utility industry. We require our lineworkers to wear specialized equipment when working next to or with power lines. There are specific protocols that our lineworkers follow when dealing with electricity. Our safety team has regular meetings where they discuss upcoming projects from a safety perspective. They monitor and track near-misses of accidents in order to understand them, share “lessons learned” and improve in the future.

As importantly, we encourage all of our crews to speak up and hold each other accountable for safety. By cultivating a culture of openness and transparency, we promote problem-solving with regard to safety, rather than defaulting to a blame game. We examine the information and data gleaned from near-misses and accident reports to discern patterns and use safety metrics to improve in those areas where we have fallen short. As appropriate, we brief contractors on our safety protocols and set expectations for their engagement.

### Keeping the community safe

Because we live and work in the community we serve, we care about our neighbors. Mitchell EMC conducts electrical safety demonstrations in schools and for community events.

May is National Electrical Safety Month. According to the Electrical Safety Foundation, each year thousands of people in the United States are critically injured and electrocuted as a result of electrical fires, accidents and electrocution in their own homes. Many of these accidents are preventable. There is much you can do to keep yourself and your community safe around electricity.

Don't attempt electrical DIY projects or overload your outlets. Report downed power lines, unlocked substations or padmount transformers that look amiss. Contact Mitchell EMC for additional electrical safety tips. If you would like us to provide a safety demonstration at your school or community event, please contact Heather Greene at [heather.greene@mitchellemc.com](mailto:heather.greene@mitchellemc.com). Be mindful when it comes to electrical safety. Pause and take the extra time to plug into safety.

*Anne Prince 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.*

# Co-ops to Congress: Fund Rural Broadband

Congress has a good opportunity this year—*actually, more than one*—to jump-start rural economies and promote rural broadband deployment. The Trump administration and lawmakers on both sides of the aisle have expressed support for funding rural broadband to help bridge the digital divide, so the political climate is right for striking a deal that makes a significant down payment toward this goal.

The Bipartisan Budget Agreement enacted in February contained a \$20 billion “infrastructure initiative” for fiscal years 2018 and 2019. House and Senate appropriators could set aside some of this funding for broadband in spending bills for either of the two years.

In order to maximize the impact of those funds, America’s electric cooperatives urged Congress to dedicate some of this funding to the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Rural Utilities Service for rural broadband deployment, disbursing the funds through loans and grants to qualified organizations, including electric co-ops.

Another piece of legislation to be considered by Congress this year is the Farm Bill, which is reauthorized every five years. The bill sets the nation’s food and agriculture policy, affecting everything from what crops are grown to funding for food nutrition programs. But the bill also sets funding levels for many programs important to electric co-ops run by USDA—again, a possible source of broadband funding.

Finally, there has been plenty of discussions on Capitol Hill and within the administration on moving legislation to deal with the nation’s aging infrastructure.

Roads and bridges are often the first topic of any infrastructure conversation. But in the modern economy, gleaming roads and bridges are irrelevant if they lead to rural communities that lack high-speed internet access. Quality broadband service is a necessity, not a luxury, in the 21st century economy and should be addressed by any proposed infrastructure package.

Whichever path Congress chooses, the imperative of funding rural broadband can’t be understated.

Rural America faces stiff economic challenges. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, less than 15 percent of American businesses are located in rural areas and small towns. Inadequate broadband access is making this problem worse and contributing to the exodus of talented, young people.

Access to broadband also is essential for modern education, health care and business. But at least 23 million rural Americans lack access to high-speed internet. We can’t turn our backs on this digital divide.

For more than 75 years, America’s electric cooperatives have powered local economies across 56 percent of the nation’s landmass. As times and technology change, broadband has become an indispensable part of electric utility operations – extending beyond the electric meter and into household energy management. These state-of-the-art energy efficiency services increasingly require access to high speed internet.

Now, nearly 100 electric co-ops are reinvesting in rural America by bringing high-speed internet access to rural homes, businesses and schools. This

connectivity serves two key purposes: bridging the digital divide for co-op members and enhancing the co-op business operation network, allowing the co-op and members to adopt emerging energy management technology. These newly connected co-op communities are proven to create jobs, attract new employers and directly jump-start local economies.

The convergence of new technology and partnerships has made rural broadband deployment more achievable than ever. As electric cooperatives work to bring broadband to rural America, some have formed innovative partnerships with local telecom companies and others.

Yet despite these advances, the high cost of rural broadband deployment remains the biggest obstacle to successfully closing the digital divide. Rural service territory is often rugged and remote, which drives up the cost of deployment. At the same time, there are fewer customers to defray the costs.

That’s why an expanded combination of federal grant and loan funding is essential. An infrastructure package, the Farm Bill and annual appropriations bills present opportunities to secure that necessary financial backstop.

What’s good for rural America is good for the entire nation. We can’t afford to leave our rural communities behind. Now it is time for Congress to allocate the necessary funding so that all Americans can enjoy quality broadband service.

*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.*

## Attention Farmers Just a reminder...

**Time Of Use (TOU) rates for irrigation systems begins on June 1. The TOU kWh cost is based on the time of day in which it is used. The rate will distinguish between ON-PEAK and OFF-PEAK usage.**

**\*TOU rates apply from June 1 - September 30. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at 229-336-5221 or 1-800-479-6034.**





# Happy Retirement!

It saddens us to announce the retirement of Marvin Hicks, 1st Class Lineman. His last working day was February 22, 2018.



Marvin has been an integral part of our company for the last 27 years. His contributions will always be valued and remembered. His hard work, commitment, and dedication are worthy of admiration. Marvin will be greatly missed. Filling his shoes will be an almost impossible task.

On behalf of every one at Mitchell EMC, we would like to wish him the best of luck and a happy retirement.



We are at once happy and sad to announce the retirement of Carl Crutcher, Buildings and Grounds Coordinator. He has been an outstanding addition for more than 16 years of service and a true inspiration for all of us.

We all recognize Carl for his unconditional dedication, grace, and congeniality. He will be deeply missed but we can only feel happy for him after many years of service.

On behalf of every one at Mitchell EMC, we would like to wish him the best of luck and a happy retirement.

## Change Habits to BEAT THE PEAK

You can beat the peak (and save money!) by decreasing your power use when energy demand and prices are at their highest. Here are a few tips to help you get started:

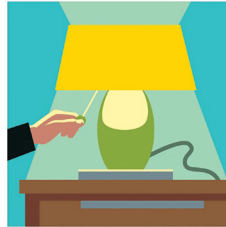
### Laundry for Less:

Full loads mean fewer cycles, and washers and dryers run in the late evenings add less heat and humidity to the home. Energy can cost less outside of peak hours.



### Cool Off/Calm Down:

Turn off unnecessary lighting and electronics that generate heat, resist the urge to turn down the thermostat and remember, lower fan settings use less energy.



### Intramural Competition:

Online gaming with each active player using their own computer, display, gaming console and internet connection gets pricey. Play each other at home on one screen and save.



### Countertop Convenience:

Range or oven cooking can really warm up a kitchen. Microwaves, convection ovens, induction cooktops, Crock-Pot® and toaster ovens put more cooking heat where you need it.



## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

When streaming online content, use the smallest device that makes sense for the number of people watching. Avoid streaming on game consoles, which use 10 times more power than streaming through a tablet or laptop.

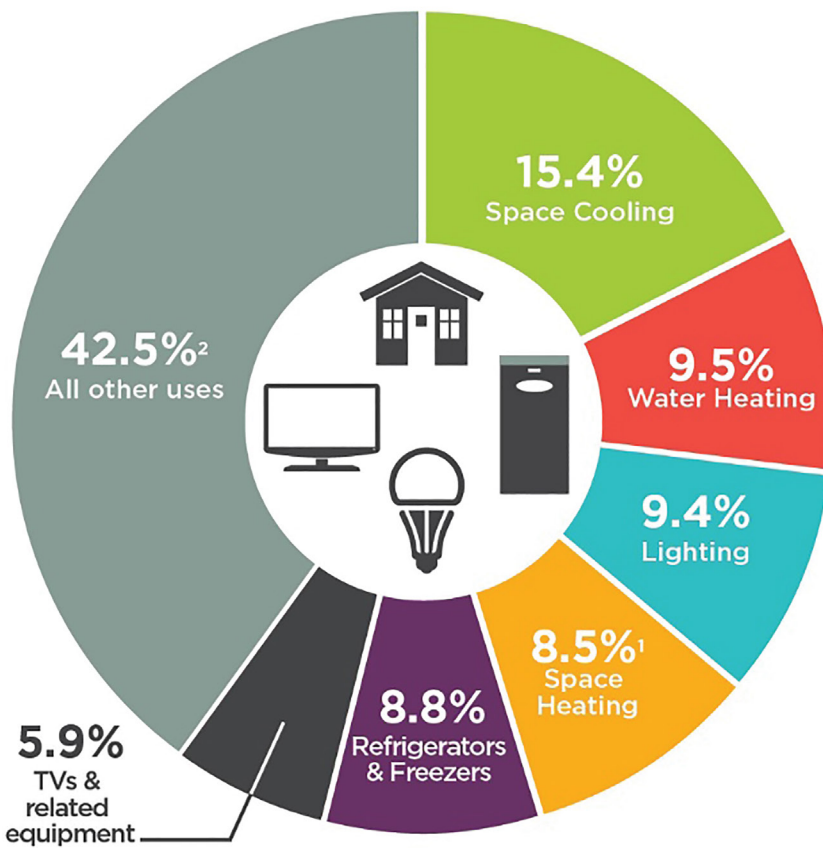
Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)



# How Americans Use Electricity

Electricity is an essential part of modern life. Last year, the use of electricity in the U.S. was 13 times greater than electricity use in 1950.

The latest data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration shows the combined use of clothes washers and dryers, computers, dishwashers, small appliances and other electrical equipment accounts for 40 percent of electricity consumption in American homes.



AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES

Source: EIA, Annual Energy Outlook 2018.  
<sup>1</sup>Includes consumption for heat and operating furnace fans and boiler pumps. <sup>2</sup>Includes miscellaneous appliances, clothes washers and dryers, computers and related equipment, stoves, dishwashers, heating elements, and motors.

**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



## Butter Pecan Ice Cream

### Ingredients:

2 can sweetened condensed milk  
½ or 3.4 box French Vanilla pudding  
1 cup pecans, measured then chopped  
8 tablespoons melted butter  
2 teaspoons maple flavoring  
1 quart half n half  
1 quart whipping cream, unwhipped  
Whole milk

Sauté/toast pecans in butter. In a large bowl combine sweetened condensed milk, maple flavoring and mix well. Stir in remaining ingredients except for pecans and butter, stir well. Pour into churn and then top off with whole milk to fill line and stir. **DO NOT ADD PECANS YET.** Begin churning, and after 10 minutes, open churn and pour in pecans and butter and stir. Finish freezing into ice cream. Yields 1 gallon. Remember to pack in ice before serving for 1 ½ hours or more.

*Thanks!*

to

**Cindy Boyett**, Worth 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.