



The news
you need to
know in
5 minutes!

CAMILLA, GEORGIA
www.mitchellemc.com

Utilities are raising awareness about scams

By Tracy Warren

When a scammer called Florida pet clinic operator Cindy Evers last year and demanded immediate payment on an overdue electric bill, it sounded real.

“They knew my account number and gave me a figure that I owed that’s close to what I usually pay on my electric bill,” Evers said. She paid, even though, in the back of her mind, she knew her payment wasn’t late.

“I have pets under sedation, and I’m taking care of animals. I think I just panicked, thinking they were going to shut my electricity off. I did what they told me to do.”

Evers lost \$900 because the call was a scam.

The scam that duped Evers has been plaguing utility consumers across North America for several years, robbing them of millions.

Now, utilities are fighting back.

Recently, more than 80 utilities and energy industry organizations from across the U.S. and Canada joined forces to recognize the first-ever North American Utilities United Against Scams Day on November 16, 2016.

Electric co-ops have increased their communication efforts, sending information directly to members and encouraging local TV stations and newspapers to warn citizens about the scam, how it works and what people should do and not do, if they are ever targeted.

Even the wariest consumers can be duped, however. The scammers are developing new tactics every day.

The “past due” scam, similar to the one Florida customer Evers experienced, goes something like this: A customer gets a call from an 800-number that looks like a valid utility company phone number. Widely available spoofing software allows crooks to display what appears to be an official number on caller IDs. The caller threatens to cut off power if the customer doesn’t pay.

But here’s the giveaway: The crook will demand

payment via a prepaid debit card or money order. And he’ll ask for it within a specified time frame—often an hour or less.

The scammer may even quote an amount that sounds like your typical monthly bill. That way, the threat has even more credibility.

Scammers might direct the customer to a specific store nearby that sells the prepaid cards and instruct the customer to put money on the card and provide the card number to the scammer.

Some scammers have even been bold enough to contact potential victims in person, coming to the member’s house. **Here are some tips on how to protect yourself:**

- Do not assume the name and number on your caller ID are legitimate. Caller IDs can be spoofed.
- Never share your personal information, including date of birth, Social Security number or banking account information.
- Never wire money to someone you don’t know.
- Do not click links or call numbers in unexpected emails or texts – especially those asking for your account information.
- Most utilities will NOT require their customers to purchase prepaid debit cards or money orders to avoid an immediate disconnection.
- If you receive a call that sounds like it may be a scam, or if you believe the call is a scam, hang up, call the police and report the incident to your local utility.

How you can help

You can alert your family members and friends. Share the scammers’ tactics described in this article or those you have heard about. You can also help raise awareness and warn others by reposting scam awareness information on social media; use the hashtag **#stopscams**.

Tracy Warren 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.



A Community Partner Since 1937

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Use wool or rubber dryer balls in the clothes dryer to reduce drying time and static.

Wool dryer balls can also absorb extra moisture. These are an efficient alternative to dryer sheets, which can create buildup on the dryer's filter and reduce air circulation. If you prefer dryer sheets, scrub the filter once a month to remove buildup.

Source: www.energy.gov



Stay Comfortable.

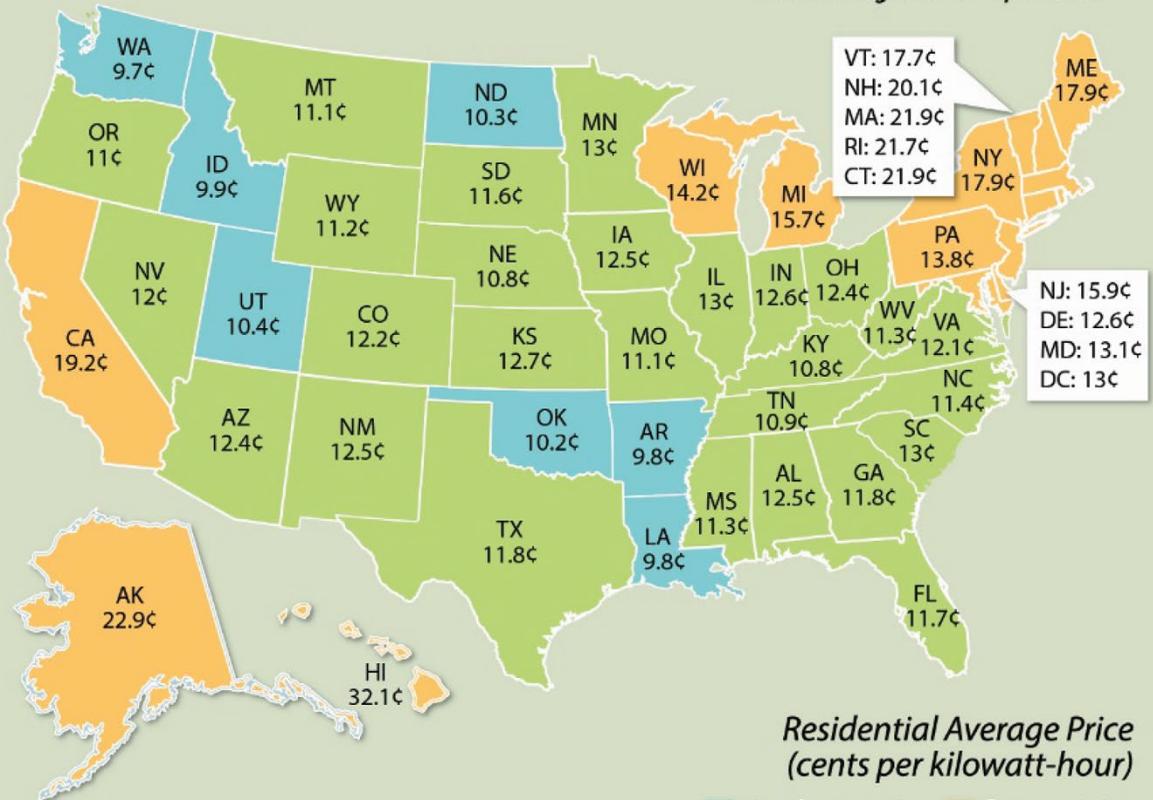
Space heating and cooling account for a large portion of the average home's energy use. A programmable or smart thermostat can help you control the temperature of your home and save energy.

Photo Credit: Community Energy

Average Prices for Residential Electricity

2019 figures, in cents per kWh

U.S. Average: 13.01¢ per kWh



Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration
Numbers rounded to nearest tenth of a cent

MITCHELL EMC is proud to offer Scholarship Opportunities for the Youth of our area. The Walter Harrison Scholarship and The Mitchell EMC Operation Round-Up Scholarships. Visit our website and look under the community tab to find out all the details and to download your application for our 2021 Scholarships!

Walter Harrison Scholarship

Due In the Camilla Office By: FEBRUARY 1, 2021

Mitchell EMC is pleased to be a part of helping our members pursue their dream of a college education. We annually offer the prestigious **Walter Harrison Scholarship**, a program sponsored by the EMCs of Georgia. The \$1,000 scholarship can be used to defray educational costs at any accredited two- or four-year university, college or vocational-technical institute in Georgia.

To be eligible for consideration, students must be accepted or enrolled in an accredited undergraduate degree program, complete the two-page Walter Harrison application and write a two-page autobiographical sketch with references to future plans and goals. **Students applying for this scholarship MUST live in a house that receives electric service from Mitchell EMC.**



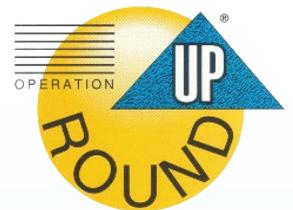
Operation Round-Up Scholarship

Due To The Community Foundation of South Georgia By: MARCH 1, 2021

What better way to invest in the future than by investing in the outstanding youth of our communities? Mitchell EMC Members who enroll in Operation Round-Up are doing exactly that by providing scholarships to deserving students. Participating members allow us to round their electric bills up to the nearest whole dollar amount. Though it may not seem like much, those funds added together make a huge positive difference in our local community.

A maximum of ten (10) renewable scholarships will be awarded on an annual basis. Scholarships will be \$2,500 per semester, twice a year, for up to four years to assist in attaining an undergraduate degree from a post-secondary institution in the United States. After the first Semester, the monies for subsequent semesters will be issued provided that students have submitted prior semester grades to verify they have maintained a minimum GPA of 2.5 and continue to be enrolled as a full-time student.

Applicants must be a graduating high school senior or a student currently enrolled in or attending a post-secondary college, technical college or university in the United States, and that has attained at least a 2.5 GPA. The applicant, their parent(s) or legal guardian(s) must have their primary residence or a place of business in the Mitchell EMC Service Area. Preference will be given to Mitchell EMC consumers. However, further consideration will be given based on financial need, academic achievement, extracurricular school activities or employment, community service, and leadership qualities.



Please note that the scholarships have different deadlines and should be mailed to different addresses listed on the scholarship form. We encourage students to apply for both scholarships. Applications will be judged by an independent scholarship committee, and winners will be notified by May 1.

Mitchell EMC Payment Options

Mitchell EMC has several options for you to pay your bill. You can come by any Mitchell EMC office during business hours, Monday through Friday, 8 am to 5 pm. Night deposits are available at each location as well. In addition, phone payments can be made by calling (229) 336-5221 or (800) 479-6034 any time, day or night, to pay your bill by credit card.

You may also mail your payment to:

Mitchell EMC
PO Box 409
Camilla, GA 31730

The following billing options are also available for our members:

Bank Draft

Members can arrange for energy bill payments to be processed automatically each month on the due date via bank draft. A bank draft authorization form should be completed. Please include a voided check and either mail or bring it to one of our offices.

Recurring Credit Card

Arrange for payment by Visa or Mastercard: Complete and sign the back part from your

bill stub and return to Mitchell EMC, noting the type of credit card, card number, expiration date & verification code or call our office at (800) 479-6034.

Pre-Pay

Prepaid metering is a pay-as-you-go alternative to traditional electric service with a monthly bill. Once the account is set up, you can pay as frequently as you like, as much as you like. To sign up, call our office at **(800) 479-6034** or come into one of our three office locations.

Mitchell EMC Mobile App

Our mobile app is designed to give you fast, secure account access so you can easily manage your account details, view your bill and account balance, make payments and find payment locations, schedule alerts, reminders, and receive push notifications.

CheckOut by PAYGO

A fast and convenient way to pay your Mitchell EMC bill while checking out at participating retailers near you. Get your barcode and find locations at www.mitchellemc.sedccheckout.com/Lookup.

Update Your Account

Help us Help You. By keeping your account information up to date, Mitchell EMC is better able to answer questions and serve your account. If you've...

- Moved or have a new mailing address
- Married or changed your name, or

- Changed or added a phone number
- We would also like to obtain your e-mail address & cell phone numbers. You can easily update your information by calling our office at 1-800-479-6034 and speaking with one of our friendly Customer Service Representatives.

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 Cookies

Ingredients:

1 cup of pecans, chopped
7 tbsp of butter, unsalted
1/3 cup of granulated sugar
1 cup of brown sugar
2 eggs
1 tbsp pure vanilla extract
2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 tsp. baking soda
a pinch of salt
Pecan halves for the top of each cookie

Directions:

Preheat your oven to 350° and line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper. Beat butter, granulated sugar, and brown sugar with an electric mixer, until light and creamy. Next, add eggs, vanilla extract, and beat again for an additional 2 minutes. Immediately add flour, baking soda, salt, and mix until just combined. Scoop balls, using a medium cookie scoop onto prepared baking sheets and add a pecan half to the top of each cookie. Bake until golden brown, about 10 to 15 minutes. Finally, cool cookies on a wire rack. ENJOY!!

The recipe was submitted online.

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.