

Mitchell EMC



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.5 minutes!

CAMILLA, GEORGIA
www.mitchellemc.com

Reliability Requires Investment

By Tony Tucker, President & CEO

As your local power provider, Mitchell EMC's mission has always been simple: keep the lights on and support the communities we serve. But behind every switch, every warm home and every business that opens its doors is a complex system that requires constant care. Reliable electricity doesn't happen by accident. It requires ongoing investment in our local grid—through system repairs, maintenance, upgrades and the integration of new technologies that help us operate smarter and more efficiently.

Much of the energy system we rely on today was built decades ago. While it continues to serve us well, age alone means that components must be repaired or replaced to maintain performance and safety. From poles and wires to transformers and substations, every part of the grid has a lifespan. Routine maintenance helps extend that lifespan, but eventually equipment must be updated to meet modern standards. These proactive investments reduce the likelihood of outages, shorten restoration times when disruptions do occur and create a stronger backbone for our growing community.

The demands on the electric grid are also evolving. Homes and businesses today use more electricity than ever, and that trend will only continue. Electric vehicles, advanced HVAC systems, smart appliances and new commercial facilities add load to the local distribution system. As these technologies take hold, the grid must be able to support increased demand while maintaining the reliability our members expect. Strategic upgrades such as constructing a Fiber Optic network to not only provide reliable high speed internet service to our members and local businesses, but this network will also play an important role in providing communications for Smart Grid and Feeder Automation Systems. These systems will not only improve the reliability of our Electric Distribution Network but will also make the way for real-time automated outage reporting. These technologies are essential to ensuring we can meet these needs both today and in the decades ahead.

At the same time, new technologies are reshaping how we operate. Tools such as automated switching devices, smart meters, drones and advanced monitoring systems allow us to detect problems faster and respond more effectively. These technologies can isolate problems, reroute power to minimize outages and provide real-time data that helps us plan and maintain equipment more efficiently.

Implementing innovative technologies into the grid is not just a convenience—it is a necessity for ensuring reliability in an increasingly complex energy landscape.

While these improvements require thoughtful planning and financial investment, the return is significant. A stronger grid supports economic growth, improves service quality and enhances safety for our crews and community. Most importantly, it ensures that the essential power you rely on is available whenever you need it.

Our commitment to reliability runs deeper than infrastructure alone. It reflects our responsibility to the people and communities we serve. Every upgrade, every repair and every technology we deploy is an investment in your daily life—from the comfort of your home to the success of local businesses and schools.

We know that powering our community means preparing for the future, not just maintaining the present. By investing in our local grid today, we are building the foundation for a brighter, more resilient tomorrow.

The Power Surge

Factors Driving the Rising Demand for Electricity

Article provided by NRECA

Across the U.S., the demand for power is climbing at one of the fastest rates in decades. As the economy becomes more reliant on electricity and data centers continue to sprout up in many parts of the country, electric cooperatives are preparing to meet the challenges that skyrocketing demand brings.

The North American Reliability Corporation—the watchdog for the U.S. electric grid—recently released the 2025-2026 winter reliability assessment, which echoed other recent reports, including longer-term outlooks that expect sufficient energy resources during normal conditions but potential supply shortfalls and outages under more intense weather conditions.

Extreme weather coupled with additional factors that are driving increased demand creates challenges for electric utilities, including cooperatives, in their mission to provide reliable power around the clock.

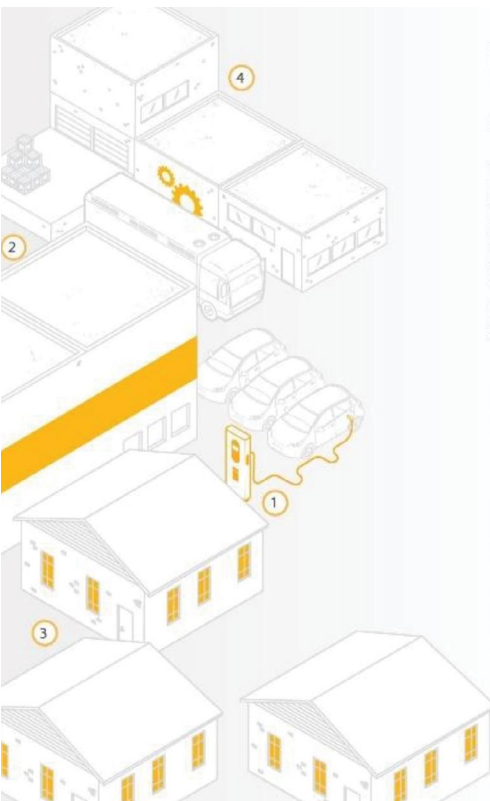
Several key factors are driving increased demand—including economic growth, expanded manufacturing, data center development and increased electrification in transportation. Together, these trends are reshaping how much electricity we consume and how quickly utilities like Mitchell EMC must adapt to meet future needs.

One of the biggest drivers of rising demand is increased electrification. More homes and businesses are transitioning to electricity for home heating, water heating and transportation. EVs are becoming more common on the road, and many states are offering incentives to help consumers make the switch. Additionally, electric heat pumps are replacing traditional furnaces in many homes due to their efficiency. These transitions mean more energy use and pressure placed on our electric grid.

Data centers are another major contributor to rising demand. As AI, cryptocurrency and cloud computing technologies grow, the need for data processing and storage has skyrocketed. Data centers require huge amounts of power to operate servers and cooling systems 24/7. Tech companies are building new facilities nationwide—many of which are in electric cooperative-served areas—and these regions are experiencing multi-year surges in electricity demand as a result.

Economic and manufacturing growth are also contributing to higher electricity use. As businesses expand and new industries take root, especially in rural and suburban areas, the demand for reliable, high-capacity power is increasing. The resurgence of domestic manufacturing has led to major facility construction. These facilities often require substantial energy loads, and many operate continuously to keep production lines running. This growth brings jobs and investment, but it also puts new pressures on the electric grid.

Population growth and housing development are also contributing to rising demand in many regions,



Why is the Demand for Electricity Rising?

Demand for electricity in the U.S. is booming. Recent data shows that power consumption nationwide is set to increase by at least 38 gigawatts (enough electricity to power 3,600 homes for one year) between now and 2028. Meeting this new demand will require a combination of new power plants, grid upgrades and energy storage technology advancements. Here are the key factors that are driving increased demand.

1

Increased Electrification: Electric vehicle adoption, electrification of home heating and industrial electrification are increasing overall U.S. energy consumption.

2

Data Centers: Driven by explosions in AI, cryptocurrency and cloud computing, total U.S. data center load is projected to increase by 65% by 2050.

3

Economic Growth: Residential power consumption is expected to increase by 14% to 22% through 2050 due to increases in population and steady economic growth.

4

Manufacturing Growth/Onshoring: New, expanding and “onshored/reshored” manufacturing capacity driven by federal incentives is expected to increase industrial demand by 13,000 GWh per year.

and everyday life is becoming more energy dependent, too. Smart appliances, connected devices, home offices and entertainment systems are adding to overall consumption, even as efficiency improves.

While increased demand presents new challenges for electric utilities, it also has the potential to create significant opportunities for co-ops and the communities they serve, such as job growth, steady revenue and improved infrastructure. Electric co-ops are responding by planning carefully for the future—investing in grid modernization and offering programs and services to help co-op members conserve energy.

Strategic planning is critical to ensuring the grid can support everything from EV charging to large-scale manufacturing plants.

Electricity powers nearly every aspect of today’s economy, and its role will only grow stronger. As electrification accelerates, long-term planning becomes more important than ever.

Mitchell EMC is ready to meet rising demand in our local communities. Through innovation, investment and collaboration, we are preparing for a more reliable and resilient energy future.

NRECA is the national trade association representing nearly 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.

Scholarship Opportunities

Walter Harrison Scholarship

Due In the Camilla Office By: FEBRUARY 1, 2025

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.



The Walter Harrison Scholarship, created in 1985 by the board of directors of the Georgia Electric Membership Corporation, is awarded to students who excel in the areas of GPA, SAT scores, academic ability, scholastic honors, and demonstrate a financial need. The award pays tribute to the late Walter Harrison, a pioneer in the rural electrification movement and a leader at the local, state and national level in the electric cooperative program.

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.

Entries received will be forwarded from Mitchell EMC to the Statewide Competition. The statewide scholarship selection committee is comprised of EMC Directors and Managers from across Georgia. Please do not alter the original application. All submissions must be on Georgia EMC Application Forms. Walter Harrison Scholarship Applications must be submitted to Mitchell EMC. Applications must be submitted directly to Mitchell EMC by postal service or at one of our office locations. Incomplete applications or applications received **AFTER** the due date of February 1st will **NOT** be considered.

OPERATION ROUNDUP SCHOLARSHIP

Due To The Community Foundation of South Georgia By: MARCH 1, 2025



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. Mitchell EMC Operation Round-Up Scholarship applications will be available through an online portal at the Community Foundation of South Georgia (<https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Login?urlkey=cfsga>)

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 Announces Change in Outdoor Lighting Rates

Over the past few years, communities and businesses across our region have felt the effects of economic uncertainty and rising costs. At Mitchell EMC, we have seen these pressures reflected in every aspect of our operations. The cost of power generation has climbed, driven by unpredictable increases in fuel prices and other essential materials needed to keep our services reliable and safe for every member.

One area particularly impacted has been our outdoor lighting service. As the costs of maintaining and powering these lights have grown, so too has the expense of acquiring the materials and fuel needed for their upkeep. Supply chain challenges—delays in receiving crucial equipment and price increases on basic parts—have become the new normal for all utilities, including ours.

Like many cooperatives and businesses, Mitchell EMC has carefully reviewed our revenue and expenditures. Our goal is always to meet the financial requirements set by our lending institutions and to fulfill all our contractual commitments while ensuring that any margins over costs are eventually returned to

our members through Capital Credits.

With these economic realities in mind, Mitchell EMC must now adjust the rate for outdoor lights. Beginning in April, the standard rate for an outdoor light will be \$12. This change reflects the rising costs associated with maintaining and powering these services and is necessary to ensure the continued reliability and safety of our operations.

This is our first such increase in several years, and it comes only after thorough evaluation and thoughtful consideration. We understand that many businesses and households are facing similar pressures and want to be transparent about why this step is necessary.

We want to assure you that Mitchell EMC remains committed to providing quality service at the lowest feasible cost, and that our rates for outdoor lighting will continue to be competitive within our region.

We appreciate your support and understanding as we navigate these challenging times together. Please contact our office if you have questions about this change or need assistance with your account. Thank you for being a valued member of Mitchell EMC.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Mid-winter is a great time to ensure you're making the most of your home heating system. Replace or clean filters to keep your furnace or heat pump running efficiently. Listen for strange noises and check for uneven heating—these signs indicate that the system may need servicing. Ensure vents and radiators aren't blocked by furniture or rugs as proper airflow helps your system work less and saves energy. A little maintenance along the way can prevent costly repairs and keep your home cozy through winter.



TIPS TO AVOID ENERGY SCAMS



Enrolling in autodraft payments with your utility provider can help prevent certain types of utility bill scams. If a scammer contacts you with fake disconnection threats, you can rest easy knowing your bill is paid automatically through a pre-arranged, secure channel. Autodraft payments also eliminate the risk of exposing checks and personal banking info through the mail. If your utility offers autodraft payments, consider enrolling to stay on track and avoid certain scams.

Source: AARP



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



Picture Credit: [celebratingsweets.com/
maple-pecan-pie/](http://celebratingsweets.com/maple-pecan-pie/)

Maple Pecan Pie

Ingredients

1 Cup Maple Syrup
1 Tablespoon whiskey (optional)
3 Large eggs
3 Tablespoons of butter, melted
1 Teaspoon vanilla extract
 $\frac{3}{4}$ Cup brown sugar
2 Tablespoons of white flour
 $\frac{1}{4}$ Teaspoon salt
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ Cups of chopped pecans
1 Pie shell

Directions

Whisk together all filling ingredients except the pecans. Place pecans in an unbaked pie shell and pour syrup mixture over pecans. Bake at 350° for 45-50 minutes or until top starts to puff up and center seems set.

Submitted By:
Jo Hurst, Mitchell County

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.