

Front Page:

Reducing the Risk of Wildfires

By Tony Tucker, President & CEO

Gone are the days when wildfires were primarily confined to the western United States. Rising temperatures, prolonged drought and shifting weather patterns are creating dangerous conditions in places that historically experienced few major fires. Today, more than 30 states, Georgia, face elevated wildfire risk. The reality is clear: wildfire risk is no longer regional—it is national. And it demands action from all of us.

At Mitchell EMC, protecting our members and the communities we serve is our highest priority. As we recognize National Wildfire Awareness Month in May, I want you to know that wildfire mitigation is not seasonal work for us. It is a year-round commitment embedded in how we operate and invest in our local system.

One of the most important ways we reduce wildfire threats is through our comprehensive vegetation management program. Overgrown trees and power lines are a dangerous combination, particularly during dry and windy conditions. Throughout the year, Mitchell EMC crews—along with our trusted local contractors—proactively trim and remove vegetation that could come into contact with power lines and other critical infrastructure. This work requires careful planning, coordination with property owners and ongoing inspection. While it may not always be visible, it is one of the most effective tools we have to prevent fire ignition and maintain reliable electricity.

In addition to boots on the ground, Mitchell EMC is leveraging advanced technology to strengthen our system. We are deploying specialized power line sensors that continuously monitor equipment performance and alert us to potential issues before they escalate. Advanced imaging tools and system analytics allow us to detect abnormal conditions and respond quickly. By investing in these modern technologies, we are shifting from reactive repairs to proactive prevention—identifying risks early and addressing them before they become emergencies.

Wildfire mitigation also requires thoughtful public policy. Managing electric infrastructure in and around public lands can present unique challenges. That is why we support practical, commonsense solutions such as the Fix Our Forests Act, which would streamline the ability of electric cooperatives and other utilities to maintain power lines on federal lands and reduce hazardous “fuel” buildup. Policies that promote responsible land management are an essential part of a comprehensive wildfire prevention strategy.

While we are committed to doing our part, wildfire prevention is a shared responsibility. There are important steps each of us can take to protect our homes and neighborhoods.

Properly extinguish fires by dousing them with water, stirring the ashes and ensuring they are cool to the touch before leaving the area. Avoid outdoor burning on windy or excessively dry days. Maintain a defensible space around your home by clearing dry leaves, dead branches and other flammable debris. Use lawn equipment carefully, particularly during hot conditions, and always check local regulations for burn bans or restrictions.

Wildfires are becoming more complex and more widespread, but through proactive system management, smart investments, sound policy and community partnership, we can reduce risks and strengthen resilience.

At Mitchell EMC, we take this responsibility seriously. Our members depend on us not only for reliable power, but for leadership in safeguarding the communities we call home.

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.

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Getting Ahead of Wildfires

As the threat of wildfires increases nationwide, electric cooperatives are working to mitigate the risk of fires and protect their local systems and communities. Co-ops are:

- Deploying advanced technologies, like power line sensors and advanced imaging cameras, to help detect fires or conditions that lead to them.
- Proactively managing vegetation near power lines and other electrical equipment to decrease the volume of “fuel” and slow the spread.
- Advocating for smarter land-management policies like the Fix Our Forests Act that would allow co-ops to better maintain power lines on public lands and reduce wildfire risk.

LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT SELECTED FOR 2026 WASHINGTON YOUTH TOUR

Christian Hernandez, a student at Dougherty Comprehensive High School, and Aiden Peavy, a student at Baconton Community Charter School, have been selected to represent Mitchell EMC on the 2026 Washington Youth Tour—an all-expenses-paid leadership and civic engagement experience sponsored by Georgia’s electric membership corporations (EMCs).

Since 1965, the Washington Youth Tour has provided promising high school leaders with an up-close look at the nation’s government, history and public service while fostering connections with students from across Georgia and the United States.

The 2026 tour is scheduled for June 12—19 and will include approximately 115 student delegates from Georgia. Participants will gather in Atlanta before traveling to Washington, D.C., where they will explore the federal government firsthand. While in the nation’s capital, delegates will meet with elected officials to discuss issues important to their local communities and visit historic sites such as the U.S. Capitol, Smithsonian museums, the U.S. Supreme Court, and Arlington National Cemetery.

In addition to learning about U.S. government and history, students will participate in leadership development and team-building activities designed to help them build confidence, communication skills and a deeper understanding of their own leadership potential.

According to Heather Greene, Member and Public Relations Coordinator with Mitchell EMC, the Washington Youth Tour is designed to inspire and prepare the next generation of leaders.

“Investing in students today is an investment in the future of our communities,” said Greene. “The Washington Youth Tour is more than a trip to the nation’s capital. It’s an opportunity for students to see themselves as leaders, to engage with real-world issues, and to return home inspired to serve.”

Hernandez and Peavy were selected through a competitive application process.

Students are nominated by guidance counselors at each school in our service territory. Nominees then complete an application and write an autobiography, and must submit two reference letters, SAT scores and high school transcripts. Each student is interviewed by a three-member panel of community judges and representatives from other EMCs, who select the strongest candidates.

Margin Assignment for 2025

Margins accrued by Mitchell EMC (revenue after all expenses have been paid) have been assigned to Member's patronage credit records. This assignment is made by applying the percentage of the Cooperative's margins to each Member's annual bill, before taxes. The percentage from Mitchell's margins for 2025 is 9.37%. The table below shows examples of how you may figure your assignment. Simply multiply the percentage figures shown below times your total billing, less sales taxes, for the year.

Percentage	If annual bills (less taxes) were:	\$500	\$750	\$1,000
.09379528%	Credits assigned from Mitchell's operating margins	\$46.90	\$70.35	\$93.80

Remember to keep us informed of your correct mailing address, especially if you should move out of Mitchell EMC's service area. If you have any questions about your assignments, please call us at 229-336-5221 or 800-479-6034.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

As temperatures start to rise, many homeowners focus on staying cool. Don't forget about the small gaps around windows and doors. While air sealing is often associated with keeping cold air out during winter, it's just as important during summer. Tiny cracks and worn weatherstripping allow cool, conditioned air to escape and hot, humid air to seep indoors. This forces your air conditioner to work harder than necessary and increases energy costs. Take a few minutes to check for drafts, replace weatherstripping and seal leaks. A tighter home keeps you more comfortable and helps manage energy use.

Source: energy.gov



TIPS TO AVOID ENERGY SCAMS



If you receive a call from someone stating you have overpaid your energy bill and you should provide your banking information or a credit card number to receive a refund, hang up because it's likely a scam. If you overpay your bill, your utility will apply the overpayment credit to your account balance or mail a check. They will not call and request your banking information to issue the refund.

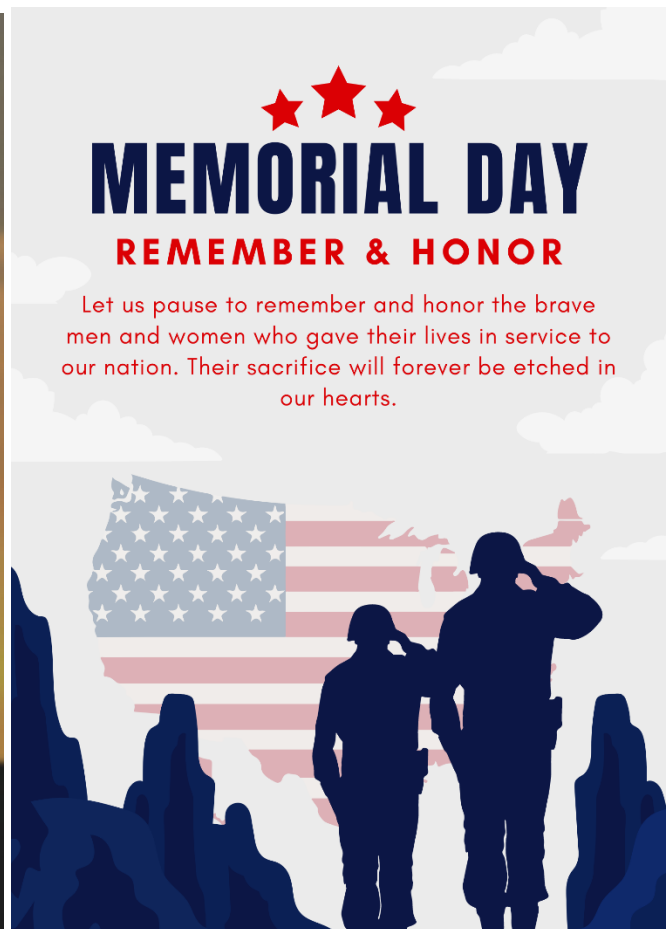
Source: *Utilities United Against Scams*





Attention Farmers Just a reminder...

Time Of Use (TOU) rates for irrigation systems begin 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 through September 30.* If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at 229-336-5221 or 1-800-479-6034.





Watts Cooking?



Banana Pudding Squares

- 35 Reduced fat Nilla Wafers, finely crushed (about 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup margarine, melted
- 1 (8 oz.) package cream cheese, softened
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup powdered sugar
- 1 (8 oz) tub Cool Whip Sugar Free whipped topping, thawed, divided
- 3 bananas, sliced
- 2 packages 1 oz each of Jell-O Vanilla Flavored Fat Free Sugar Free Instant Pudding
- 3 cups of cold fat-free milk
- $\frac{1}{2}$ square Baker's Semi-Sweet Chocolate, grated

Combine crumbs and margarine; press into bottom of 13x9 inch dish. Refrigerate.

Mix cream cheese and sugar in a medium bowl with whisk until blended. Stir in 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups of Cool Whip; spread over crust.

Top with bananas.

Beat pudding mixes and milk with whisk for 2 minutes; spread over bananas. Top with remaining Cool Whip and chocolate. Refrigerate for 3 hours.

Submitted By: Wanda Thomas, Mitchell County

Picture Credit: www.snackworks.com

Win \$25 Credit

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, Mitchell EMC, P.O. Box 409, Camilla, GA 31730 or email to heather.greene@mitchellemc.com.

(Needs to be included at the bottom of the last page on every issue)

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

Please include somewhere in every newsletter:

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.