

# current lines

April 2017

A monthly publication for Tri-County EMC members

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## Investing In Reliability

**W**hen you flip a light switch, you expect the lights to come on. When you plug in your phone, you expect it to charge. At Tri-County EMC, it is our job provide to you with reliable electric service to help make your life easier. We know outages interrupt your daily activities and we do our best to keep the power on at all times.

Your cooperative is constantly working to keep your electric system up-to-date and increase its reliability. A major portion of our expenses go to reliability efforts.

### Reconductoring/Backfeed

As part of our system improvements, we routinely rebuild lines with larger wire that can handle more electric load. With these improvements, if a substation goes down, we have the ability to serve you from an alternate location to keep power flowing to you. This also allows us to perform maintenance on power lines without interrupting your service.

### System Automation

We are also improving our system reliability by installing automated switches and controls to automatically backfeed lines. This way, if there is a power outage, the effected area can be backfed by a different location before a lineman goes out to identify the problem. Many members who might otherwise have experienced a lengthy outage can be restored immediately. (66083001)

### Fault indicators

We install fault indicators in strategic locations throughout our system. These fault indicators help us pinpoint the location of a power outage and allow linemen to quickly troubleshoot the problem.

### Vegetation Maintenance

The majority of our outages are caused by trees and vegetation growing into the power lines. Trees in the right-of-way are trimmed every five to seven years to prevent outages. Along with tree trimming, Tri-County also applies a blend of herbicides to vegetation, including trees and underbrush, to inhibit them from growing

into right-of-way. Care is taken to not spray landscaped areas, ponds, streams or wetlands. More details on right-of-way trimming are on page 2.

### Communication

The more information we can get into our outage management system during power outages, the faster we can diagnose problems and dispatch appropriate crews. Our Integrated Voice Response System (IVR) uses caller ID to quickly identify you when you call our office—via the phone number you have on your account—and get your outage reported. You can also report outages through our mobile app, myTC EMC, and the recently added outage texting system, TextTC EMC. These new technologies help us get linemen to the problem quickly while also giving you feedback, such as outage maps or updated “status” by text. For all of these outage reporting options to operate correctly, we ask that you update your phone number listed on your account. Visit [tri-countyemc.com/report-an-outage](http://tri-countyemc.com/report-an-outage) to learn more about outage reporting options.

**I**n May, Tri-County EMC will begin surveying members about their satisfaction with the cooperative. About 300 Tri-County EMC members will be surveyed by telephone each quarter. Each survey will only take about seven to ten minutes.

“I hope that every member contacted will take the time to answer the survey,” says Ray Grinberg, chief executive officer for Tri-County EMC. “Meeting your needs and expectations is important to us, and we want your honest feedback. The survey is an important tool for us to tell us how we are doing and what you would like to see from us in the future.”

Interviewers will identify themselves as calling “from Data Decisions Group on behalf of Tri-County EMC.” The phone number will always originate from a 919 area code and should show up on Caller ID as 919.391.3483.

# member satisfaction survey

# Trees A Crowd

## Right-Of-Way Maintenance Benefits You

We all appreciate trees. They provide shade on warm days, help keep homes cool, add privacy and can even increase property value. Everyone also appreciates electric service. Unfortunately, trees and power lines do not mix. Trees growing into power lines can cause power outages and can be a safety concern.

### How Often Do You Trim Vegetation?

Tri-County has a 30 foot right-of-way on high-voltage (primary) power lines. Asplundh, Tri-County EMC's trimming contractor, trims trees around primary power lines every 5-7 years. Our goal is to reach every line on our system - about 2,100 miles - and then start again.

### Is An Overgrown Right-of-Way Really Unsafe?

Accidents happen quickly. The weight of a child climbing on a tree limb that has grown into a power line can quickly cause it to become energized, posing a threat to the child. And adults can also be at risk when trying to do yard work in the trees that are close to a power line.

### Does Clearing Right-Of-Way Increase Reliability?

Trees, or tree limbs, falling into power lines can knock out power to hundreds of members in a short amount of time. Trees can cause power lines to snap and can bring down power poles with their weight, causing lengthy power outages. While not all outages can be prevented, we can easily minimize damage and outage time by keeping right of way clear. In 2016, 44% of outages were caused by trees. By amping up right of way efforts, Tri-County will be able to reduce outages in the future.

### Why Do You Trim Trees On My Property?

While most vegetation maintenance is performed along primary power lines, which typically run along major roadways, at times it is necessary to trim on a member's property. We have an obligation to our members to keep the power on and provide a safe electric system. Tree limbs growing into power lines, or dead trees that could easily fall on lines, could cause power outages and fires.

### Where Is It Safe To Plant Trees?

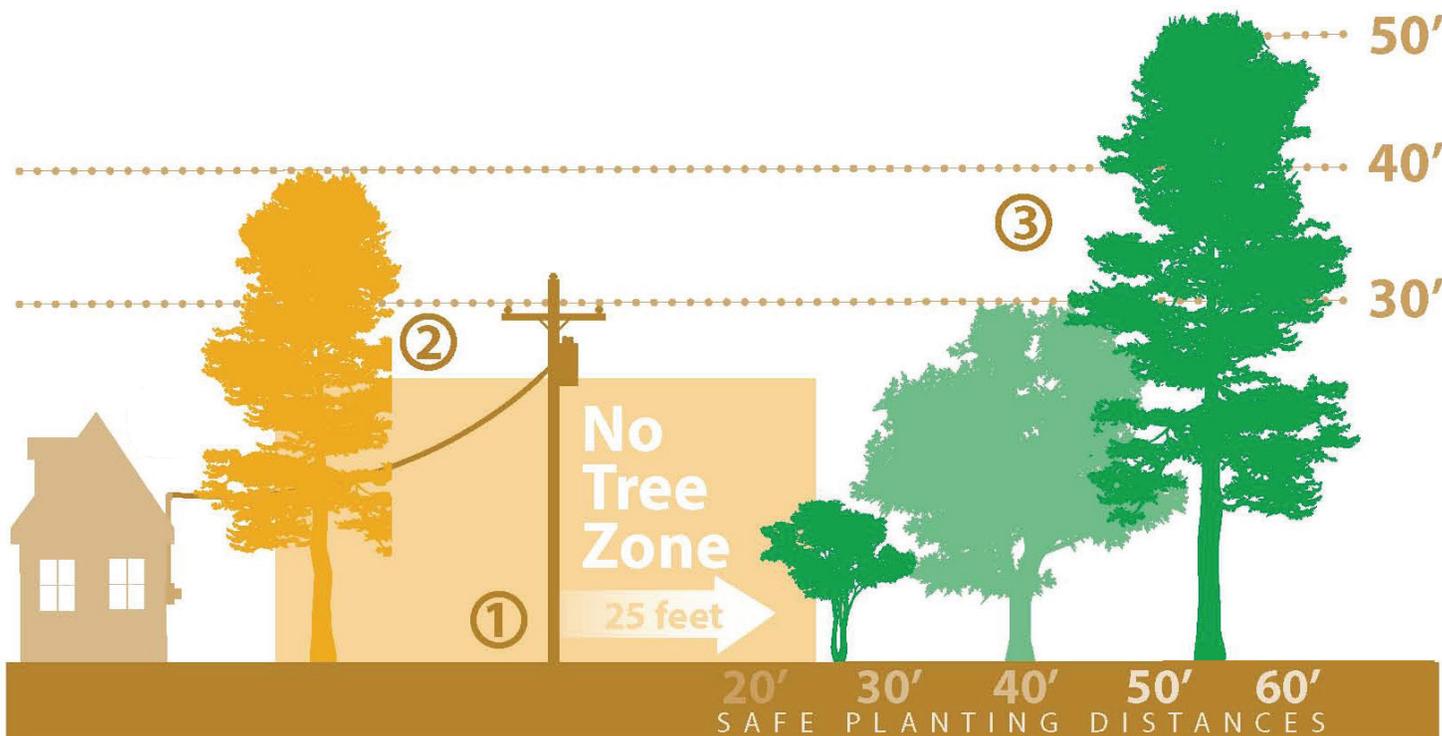
By planting bushes and trees at least 25 feet from the power line, you can help us hold costs down and increase your power reliability. As a guide, refer to the illustration below.

### I Have Underground Service. Can I Landscape Around The Transformer In My Yard?

Just as our overhead lines need clearance, so do our underground transformers. Keep shrubs at least 10 feet from the sides and backs of our equipment; don't plant anything directly in front. Doing so hampers our crews making outage repairs if they have to first trim shrubs to gain access to our equipment.

### Safe Planting

- 1: Underbrush and foliage in the right-of-way will be sprayed or mowed.
- 2: Any trees growing in the right-of-way must be trimmed.
- 3: Always plant trees at least 25 feet from power lines.



# Tri-County EMC Foundation Grants \$11,188 in March.....

In March 2017, the Tri-County EMC Foundation Board approved 7 grant projects, totaling \$11,188 in Operation Roundup funds, to benefit organizations or individuals in local communities. The organizations that received funds this quarter are:

**Cub Scout Pack 34:** \$600 to go towards dues and materials for members of the scout troop in Putnam County.

**Eatonton Putnam Arts Foundation:** \$1,000 to go towards the purchase of tables and chairs to be used during community art classes in Putnam County.

**First Presbyterian Church:** \$1,500 to purchase food for the First Presbyterian Church Food Pantry in Baldwin County.

**Jones County Public Library:** \$1,000 to purchase books for the library's summer reading program.

**Lake Oconee FCA:** \$1,000 to be used for partial scholarships for lower income students to attend a summer leadership training camp.

**Milledgeville First United Methodist Church:** \$2,700 to purchase materials to construct six wheelchair ramps in Baldwin County during the River of Life mission project.

**The Artisans Village:** \$1,138 to purchase paint for local artists to paint a mural celebrating the cultural heritage of Putnam County on buildings in downtown Eatonton.

**Putnam Christian Outreach:** \$2,250 to send 30 students and young professionals to LeaderCast – a leadership development seminar.



**First Presbyterian Church in Milledgeville was awarded an Operation Roundup Grant to purchase food for their food pantry, which serves those in need in Baldwin County.**

## About Operation Roundup:

Operation Roundup is funded by voluntary contributions from Tri-County members to the Tri-County EMC Foundation. Participants in the program have their monthly bill rounded up to the next dollar, with that surplus amount going to fund Operation Roundup. Any non-profit, civic, religious or government organization located within Tri-County's eight county service area are eligible to receive funding. Applications must be for special needs or projects. Applications may be downloaded from [www.tri-countyemc.com/operation-round-up.cms](http://www.tri-countyemc.com/operation-round-up.cms) or mailed upon request by calling 478.986.8126.

# Walter Harrison Scholarship Finalist Named.....

Abbey Reber was named Tri-County EMC's finalist for the Walter Harrison Scholarship. She will go on to compete in the statewide scholarship competition for one of seven \$1,000 scholarships. Statewide scholarship winners will be announced later this month.

Abbey is a senior at Gatewood School in Eatonton. She plans to attend Georgia College & State University in the fall and major in biology. Ultimately, she plans to be an ultrasound technician or a radiologist.

For more information on scholarships offered through Tri-County EMC, visit us online at [www.tri-countyemc.com/scholarships-overview.cms](http://www.tri-countyemc.com/scholarships-overview.cms). (64681002)



**Did you find your account number?**

Find your complete account number inside parentheses in this issue of *Current Lines* and win a \$50 bill credit. Call 478.986.8126 to claim your bill credit.

# Lineman Appreciation Month.....

Throughout April, we will celebrate the true heroes of the electric business—our linemen. During Lineman Appreciation Month, we honor the linemen who work to ensure the safe and reliable delivery of electricity.

Linemen have a direct impact on our lives every day. Without our linemen, and the electricity we depend on every day, our lives would be completely different. Just imagine. No lights. No microwaves. No cell phone chargers.

On a daily basis, they perform dangerous and critical work. From pole replacements to underground locates, everything is done to deliver reliable electric service and to keep our members safe.

“Our linemen work very hard to keep power flowing to your home and they don’t always get the recognition they deserve,” said Grinberg. “This month, I encourage you to thank the linemen that bring you electricity, making your lives easier every day.”

Tri-County is proud to honor our line workers who maintain 2,100 miles of power lines in Tri-County EMC’s service territory. We invite members to take a moment and [#thankalineman](#) for the work they do each day by posting a message to Tri-County EMC’s Facebook Page. (64857001)



## Recipe Box

### Six Week Muffins

Thanks to Effie Jo Blizzard of Putnam County for submitting this recipe. Did you know your recipe is worth \$20 if chosen? Send your best recipes to [kimb@tri-countyemc.com](mailto:kimb@tri-countyemc.com) or mail to P.O. Box 487, Gray, GA 31032.

#### Ingredients:

- 4 cups Raisin Bran Cereal
- 2 1/2 cups sugar
- 5 cups self-rising flour
- 2 tsps. salt
- 5 tsps. baking soda
- 4 eggs, beaten
- 1 qt. buttermilk
- 1 cup Crisco shortening, melted
- 1/2 cup raisins

#### Directions:

Mix the first five ingredients. Add raisins, shortening and buttermilk. Mix well. Fill muffin tins 1/2 full with the mixture. Bake at 400 degrees for 15 minutes.

Note: Effie Jo says the batter for these muffins will save for up to 6 weeks refrigerated in an airtight container.



Tri-County  
EMC

Owned By Those We Serve

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