

# current lines

February 2015

A monthly publication for Tri-County EMC members

## In this issue:

Winter Storm Pax: One Year Later  
page 1

Weathering the Storm: Before it Hits  
page 2

Weathering the Storm: After the Storm  
page 3

SurgeGuard Max, Recipe Box  
page 4

## Winter Storm Pax: One Year Later .....

One year ago this month, Tri-County EMC's system was dealt a mighty blow from Winter Storm Pax. Early on February 12, ice began collecting on trees and power lines, causing 8,500 members to be without power by that night. At dawn the next morning, when the icy precipitation turned to snow, 79% of Tri-County members were without electricity. Facing almost 17,000 outages was a daunting task for Tri-County's employees, as this was the worst outage in the cooperative's history. It took 144 people 104 hours to completely restore power to the Tri-County service area.

No matter how prepared an electric utility is, ice storms always bring the risk of power outages due to the weight of ice on power lines. Just a

½ inch accumulation of ice can add 500 pounds of extra weight to a power line, causing poles to break and lines to snap. We work hard to be prepared for any disaster & we've added several systems to make the outage restoration process as smooth as possible.

The Integrated Voice Response (IVR) system, coupled with our Outage Management System (OMS), gives employees and members a way to quickly identify what areas have outages and predict where the outage has occurred. For members that call in to report their outage, the system will recognize their phone number and quickly place their home on our outage map, making having an updated phone number on your Tri-County account an important part of having an outage restored. The IVR

system helped the cooperative take more than 22,000 outage calls during Winter Storm Pax.

In November, Tri-County installed automated vehicle location devices on coop vehicles. With this capability, we will be able to overlay a map showing the location of vehicles on the outage map, allowing for more efficient employee assignments during outages.

As we reflect on Winter Storm Pax, and hope that we never encounter another storm of that nature, we prepare for that possibility. As we ready ourselves, we ask that you plan ahead as well. We encourage you update your phone number on your account and use the tips on page 2 and 3 to ready your home and family for a power outage.

## Update Your Phone Number



The outage management system helps predict the location of an outage and helps EMC personnel analyze the entire outage and direct linemen in the most efficient way. An added advantage is the outage viewer, which lets our members see where outages are occurring.

In order for this system to work as efficiently as possible, we need up-to-date phone numbers on every account. Please take a few moments to contact us and update your information. Give us a call at **1.866.254.8100** or complete the form at [www.tri-countyemc.com/contact.da](http://www.tri-countyemc.com/contact.da).



### pictured left:

**Chris Chancey, Control Center Coordinator, demonstrates how outages are mapped, assigned and restored using the outage management system.**

**Weathering the Storm  
Home Storm Prep Tips, Page 2-3**

# Weathering the Storm.....

## before it hits



### Flashlights

Have flashlights with extra batteries on hand. While candles can be helpful as light sources, flashlights are the safer option.



### Heat

Gather heavy clothes and blankets to have on hand. If you have a working fireplace, stock up on firewood now.



### Food

Stock up on non-perishable food items that do not require cooking. Remember, your electric can opener will not work without electricity. Have a manual opener on hand.



### Information

Keep a battery-powered radio on a local station to get weather and outage updates. Be sure to charge all cell phones before the storm hits. Have a car phone charger in case you need to recharge your phone.



### Water

For those with well service, have a case of bottled water on hand. Fill any bathtubs and extra pitchers with water as well.



### Medical

Have a first aid kit and several days of prescriptions handy. Those who depend on electricity for medical devices may need to move to another location until power is restored. (81955001)

## how to Report a Power Outage .....

We still rely on you to report power outages. Don't count on a neighbor to call. Every call we receive helps us to understand the scope of the outage. And when possible, our IVR will give you up-to-date information about your individual outage.

Whenever your power is out, always take a minute to report it to Tri-County using one of the three options listed to the right.

### option 1

Call  
**1.866.254.8100**

Our customer service representatives and IVR system are ready to take your call.



Tri-County EMC plans for disasters and maintains power line right-of-way, but even with preparation, ice storms can deal a heavy blow to our system. Now is the time to prepare for Mother Nature's winter weather. (58602001)



## what to do after the storm

### Keep Away From Downed Power Lines

All downed power lines should be treated as if they are live. Do not touch them and be sure to keep children and animals a safe distance away.

### Report an Outage

Report outages and downed power lines to Tri-County EMC by calling 1.866.254.8100, using your myTCEMC mobile app, or visiting [tri-countyemc.com](http://tri-countyemc.com) on your mobile phone or tablet.

### Watch for Updates

Listen to local radio stations to hear outage reports and visit the outage viewer on [tri-countyemc.com](http://tri-countyemc.com) to check outages in your area.

### Be Safe

Do not burn charcoal or run gas-powered equipment in an enclosed space to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. Keep candles away from furniture, draperies and flammable materials. Never leave a burning candle unattended.

### Keep the Fridge Closed

Do not open freezers and refrigerators more than necessary. A refrigerator can hold its temperature for about 4 hours, and the freezer for about 48 hours, if the doors are left closed.

### Have Patience

Our first priority when the power goes out is safely getting power restored to members and our linemen will work until the job is complete. We appreciate your patience as we work to get power back to you as quickly as possible.

### option 2



#### Download the myTCEMC mobile app

Using your myTCEMC mobile app, you will be able to report outages and manage your account.



### option 3

#### Visit [tri-countyemc.com](http://tri-countyemc.com)

Although you may not be able to use your computer or laptop during an outage, you can still use your mobile device to visit [tri-countyemc.com](http://tri-countyemc.com) to report your power outage.



# SurgeGuard Max

## Protect Your Home Against Electrical Surges

Protect your home against electrical surges with SurgeGuard Max. A package of five point-of-use protectors and a meter-base protector, SurgeGuard MAX provides complete home protection against electric surges. This protection includes a warranty that backs damage against surges for any electric item in your home. Warranty amounts vary for different appliances or devices.

SurgeGuard Max is available to all Tri-County members for \$12.95 per month. A minimum term of 36 months is required. For more information visit [www.tri-countyemc.com/surge-protection.da](http://www.tri-countyemc.com/surge-protection.da) or contact us at 1.866.254.8100. (781 | 2003)



**Did you find your account number?**

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

## Recipe Box

### Mr. Jim's Meat Loaf

Thanks to Jim Long of Putnam County for submitting this recipe! **Did you know that 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:

- 1 1/2 lbs. - 2 lbs. ground deer meat (or meat of choice)
- 1 lb. ground sausage
- 1 16 oz. can of mixed vegetables, drained
- 1 cup of italian bread crumbs
- 1 medium bell pepper, chopped
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 eggs
- 2 tablespoons Weber™ hamburger seasoning
- 1/4 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/4 tsp. black pepper

#### Topping

- 1/2 cup catsup
- 1/4 cup grape jelly
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1/8 tsp. red cayenne pepper (optional)



#### Directions:

Combine all ingredients in a large bowl. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Form meat into loaf on a broiler pan for grease drainings. Mix topping in a separate bowl. Pour over loaf. Bake for 35-45 minutes, or until meat thermometer reaches 165 degrees. Remove from the oven and let it cool. Slice and enjoy. Makes approximately 14-15 slices.

*Note: This can also be made in 2 loaf pans.*



Tri-County  
EMC

Owned By Those We Serve

P.O. Box 487  
Gray, GA 31032  
478.986.8100  
FAX 478.986.4733  
[www.tri-countyemc.com](http://www.tri-countyemc.com)

C. Hill Bentley, CEO

#### Board of Directors

Tom Thompson Jr., Chairman  
Brenda P. Green, Vice Chairman  
Thomas Noles, Secretary/Treasurer  
Dan Greene, Sammy Hall,  
Chester Mercer, Marion Nelson,  
Cecil Patterson, Mike S. Rainey III

**current lines**  
Monthly Publication for  
Tri-County EMC Members  
Kim Bonner, Editor  
Communications Specialist