

current lines

February 2018

A monthly publication for Tri-County EMC members

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Cold January Brings Higher Energy Usage

The new year brought extreme cold to our service area during the first week of January. Members endured lows in the teens and highs not surpassing the 40s the entire week. Although there were warm days, the extreme cold continued to make appearances throughout the month, resulting in extra kWh usage to heat homes and keep them warm.

The graph below shows how the average January usage compares with the energy usage during January of this year.

“The temperatures are dramatically different than last January when we were experiencing highs in the 60s,” said Greg Mullis, vp of corporate services. “During the first three weeks of January this year, the daily high and low temperatures were 10 degrees below average for at least a dozen of the first 18 days. Heating systems were running much longer than normal,” said Mullis.

Although you cannot change the outside temperature to keep your heat from running, there are simple things you can do to combat your energy usage. Tri-County EMC recommends setting your thermostat to 68 degrees in winter when the home is occupied. If you have a programmable thermostat, consider lowering your temperature 6-8 degrees while you are away.

During cold days, do your best to avoid heating your home with space heaters. Using space heaters to temper the air in a bathroom for a short period of time may be a good option, but using them to heat the entire house will cost you more than using a heat pump. The amount of energy you would use to run two space heaters could power a central heat pump large enough to heat an 1,800 sq. ft. home. By using our Space Heater Calculator on our website, you can calculate the impact space heaters are making on your energy usage.

If you build a fire in your fireplace, be sure to close the damper after it is extinguished. Leaving the damper open creates a path for warm air to escape from your home.

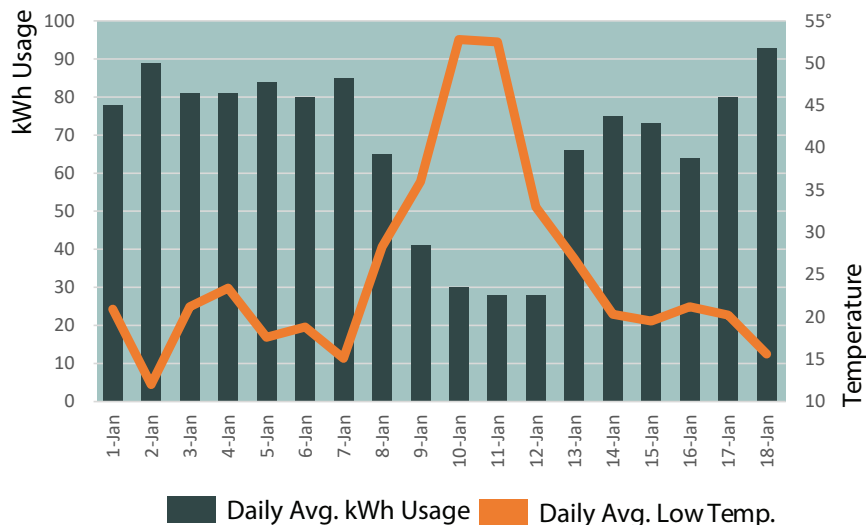
You can access similar graphs of your energy usage by using the myTCEMC mobile app. Through this app, you can see your daily energy usage and set up text alerts to let you know when you have exceeded a set energy use for the day. (55541002)

To find out more ways to save energy, visit www.tri-countyemc.com/energy-saving-tips.cms. If you would like more information, contact our Energy Services Department to schedule a free in-home energy audit at 1.866.254.8100 ext. 8119.

Average Temperatures

	low	high
2018	25°	47°
2017	39°	63°
Historical Average	34°	57°

This shows the average temperature for January 1-18 during 2017 and 2018. The overall historical average for January is shown for comparison.



Using Devices Wisely

Smart Technology for Energy Efficiency

If 25 years ago someone said you'd be able to change the temperature of your home from your phone while you are sitting in your office at work, the first thought would have been "impossible". But smart appliances and smart homes aren't just a thing of the future anymore. You can control your house alarm through your phone, change the temperature on your thermostat with a swipe of a finger and even start your washing machine or dryer while sitting in your bedroom.

These new apps and gadgets are designed to make your life easier, but they can make your home more energy efficient as well.



Thermostat:

One of the easiest ways to make an impact on energy efficiency is with a smart thermostat, like Nest models. Using your mobile device, you can view and edit your thermostat schedule and monitor how much energy is used and make adjustments accordingly. For example, program your thermostat for weekday and weekend schedules so you are not wasting energy when no one is home. Check and adjust the program periodically to keep pace with changes in household routines. When used correctly, smart thermostats can save up to 25% per month.



Lighting:

During the short winter days, it's nice to come home to a well-lit house. But, leaving lights on all day while you are out can waste energy and increase your energy usage. You can now purchase light bulbs that you can control from a mobile app, no matter if you are home or not. With prices per bulb starting as low as \$15, there is a wide range of "smart lighting" technology available for your home. Many of these bulbs can be integrated with your Nest thermostat so that you can control the lighting and temperature of your home through one app. (86711001)



Appliances:

As you purchase new appliances, consider purchasing models with smart technology. There are refrigerators available that have cameras inside so that you can look into your refrigerator from your phone – simplifying that grocery run after work. These apps can also let you know if a door has been left open or if maintenance is required. And refrigerators aren't the only ones. Smart dishwashers, clothes washers and dryers also have smart capabilities that you can control from your phone. This is even more convenient in the hot summer months when you don't want to run appliances that will add heat to your home while you are home running the air conditioning. Also, be sure to look for the ENERGY STAR® label as you shop for appliances, as they have been tested for energy efficiency.

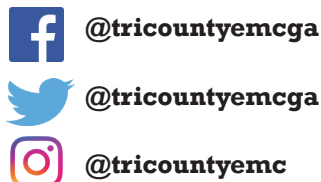


Energy Monitoring:

The first step to saving energy is monitoring your energy usage. Whether you have smart appliances or not, the myTCEMC app from Tri-County EMC allows you to monitor your energy usage. The easily navigable app allows you to see usage graphs while overlaying weather data to see how your usage correlates with the weather. It also shows you the cooperative's outage map and lets you report an outage directly from your phone. The app delivers daily and hourly kWh usage through graphs and lets you set alerts to notify you when you have used a certain amount of energy each day. The myTCEMC app is available on the Apple and Android Marketplace.



Follow Us



Keep up with the latest news and updates from Tri-County EMC on social media. We'll give energy tips, information on our scholarship and grant programs, updates on power outages and more.

Scholarships Available

As part of Tri-County EMC's commitment to our local community, each year we offer a number of leadership and scholarship opportunities to area youth. Applications for the following scholarships are due on **April 15, 2018**. For more information on the scholarships below, visit www.tri-countyemc.com/scholarships-overview.cms or contact Kim Broun at 478.986.8126 or kimb@tri-countyemc.com.



Operation Roundup Scholarship

In addition to funding community grants, the Tri-County EMC Foundation offers scholarships to undergraduate and graduate students (with preference given to non-traditional students), to help pay their college costs. Through Operation Roundup, a total of \$4,000 is awarded annually to students residing in the homes of Tri-County EMC members. The applicant must be enrolled in any U.S. accredited college or university and have maintained at least a 2.0 average.

Applications are available by mail upon request or may be downloaded at www.tri-countyemc.com/roundupscholarship.cms. Applications are due April 15 and October 15 of each year.

Cooperative Scholarship

Each spring, Tri-County EMC awards three \$2,000 Cooperative scholarships to students residing within the cooperative's service area. One scholarship is awarded in each of the three Tri-County board districts. Applications are judged by an outside panel of education professionals based equally on academics, financial need and community involvement. High school seniors and nontraditional undergraduate students are eligible to apply. Students must have a permanent address in the Tri-County EMC service area to apply.

Applications are available by mail upon request or may be downloaded on the cooperative's website at www.tricountyemc.com/cooperativescholarship.cms.

Operation Roundup Grant Applications Due

Deadline: March 1

Do you know of a non-profit or civic group looking for funding for projects in our service area? An Operation Roundup Grant may be the right fit.

Operation Roundup is a community development program funded by the voluntary contributions of Tri-County EMC's members to the Tri-County EMC Foundation. Contributions are made to the foundation when participants elect to have their monthly electric bill rounded up to the next dollar.

Each quarter, the Tri-County EMC Foundation accepts applications for grant projects that meet needs in the eight-county Tri-County EMC service area. The Tri-County EMC Foundation Board evaluates each application and awards grants based on the worthiness of the application and available funds.

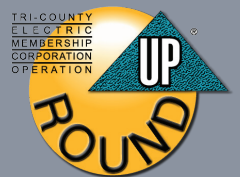
Non-profit and civic groups can apply for a project they are executing or on behalf of individuals residing within the eight county area (Baldwin, Putnam, Jones, Bibb, Jasper, Morgan, Twiggs and Wilkinson). One hundred percent of funds collected are returned to the community through donations from the foundation.

Learn more at www.tri-countyemc.com/operation-round-up.cms or call 478.986.8126. (64593001)

Operation Roundup Grants

2018 Application Deadlines

March 1
June 1
September 1
December 1



Power Outage Texting

Enroll Today For Easy Outage Reporting

Our outage texting program gives you a quick and easy way to notify Tri-County EMC when your power goes out. Just set up your account using the steps below and text OUT to 85700 if your power goes out.

Step 1: Make sure your cellphone number is listed on your account. This system uses your cellphone to identify the location of the outage. You can use the member portal on www.tri-countyemc.com to update your contact information or call us at 1.866.254.8100.

Step 2: Send textTCEMC to 85700. Sending "textTCEMC" to phone number 85700 will enroll your account in the outage texting service. Allow 24 hours between Step 1 and Step 2.

Step 3: Save 85700 in your phone as "Tri-County EMC Outage". During the next power outage, text OUT to 85700 to report your outage.

Text 85700

These one word messages are options available to communicate with Tri-County via text.

OUT: Text OUT to 85700 to let us know your power is out. You will be asked to verify the location of the outage.

STATUS: Send STATUS to 85700 after you have reported an outage to get updated information on outage restoration.

HELP: Sending HELP to 85700 will generate an auto-reply with information on technical assistance using the texting system.

STOP: To discontinue messages from the textTCEMC system, simply send STOP to 85700.

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.

Recipe Box

Cilantro Lime Cole Slaw

This recipe is courtesy of Georgia Grown and the Georgia Department of Agriculture. **Did you know that your recipe is worth \$20 if chosen? Send your best recipes to kimb@tri-countyemc.com or mail to P.O. Box 487, Gray, GA 31032.**

Dressing Ingredients:

- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 cup buttermilk
- Zest of 1 lime
- Juice of 1-1/2 limes

Slaw Ingredients:

- 1 head cabbage, chopped or shredded
- 1 carrot, shredded
- 1/8 cup chopped cilantro
- 3 green onions, chopped fine
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Directions:

Make dressing by combining mayonnaise, buttermilk, lime zest and lime juice. Whisk until smooth. In a separate bowl, toss together cabbage, shredded carrots, green onion and cilantro. Add dressing, salt and pepper. Toss to coat all slaw ingredients. Refrigerate until ready to serve. Serves 12.



Visit Georgia Grown's website, www.georgiagrown.com, for information on farms and producers across our state.



Tri-County
EMC

Owned By Those We Serve

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