

OKEFENOKE

RURAL ELECTRIC MEMBERSHIP CORPORATION

OKEFENOKE REMC • VOLUME 56, NUMBER 12 • SEPTEMBER 2003

BLACKOUT WAS “WAKE UP CALL” FOR NATION

The blackout that left 50 million Americans in the Northeast without power Thursday, August 14, 2003, should serve as a “wake up call” for all who take the reliable and safe delivery of electricity for granted, according to President George W. Bush.

In less than three minutes, 61,800 megawatts of electricity stopped flowing and cities from Michigan to Connecticut stood still. Fortunately, by 6 a.m. Friday, two-thirds of the power had been restored. Full restoration of service, though, had to wait for nuclear power plants to come back on line, according to the North American Electric Reliability Council (NERC).

“The good news is that electric service in Georgia was not affected by the blackout,” says OREMC General Manager John Middleton. *“All of our systems are stable and operating well.”*

Officials of Georgia System Operations Corporation (GSOC) closely monitor all aspects of the system that delivers 27 billion kilowatt hours of electricity to the customers served by Georgia’s EMCs each year. GSOC and Georgia Power centers are in continuous communication with one another and control centers in surrounding states. The EMCs coordinate with other utilities and officials of the Southeast Electric Reliability Council (SERC) to assure the reliability and security of the system that serves Georgia’s EMCs. We also participate in the Southern Sub-region Security Coordinator Operating Committee to ensure operating reliability in the South is properly coordinated among all operating entities.

“In the decade of the 1990s, while Georgia’s population was growing at an astounding 26.4 percent, demand for electricity was growing even faster — a whopping 47 percent,” said Middleton. *“Through careful planning and expedited construction of generation, transmission and distribution facilities, we’ve been able to keep up with demand and provide reliable service to our 29,000 member/consumers at OREMC and the 3.7 million consumers served by Georgia’s EMCs.”*

But the blackout in the Northeast indicates that generation, transmission and distribution of electricity can never be taken for granted.

FAST FACTS:

THE GRID

Generation, transmission and distribution are the three legs of the triad that deliver electricity reliably to all of us every day. Transmission is often the most over-looked and least understood.

Thousands of miles of high-voltage transmission lines criss-cross the country, connecting generating plants and local distribution systems. Because electricity cannot be stored on a shelf, the transmission system must be capable of permitting electricity to flow at the speed of light from generator to consumer on demand.

The USA is divided into three main power grids. One grid serves the Western states, another serves most of Texas, and the third covers the eastern United States. The Eastern and Western grids are also connected with Canadian provinces.

The North American Electric Reliability Council (NERC), a non-profit organization, was formed in the late 1960s to promote reliable electric system operation through establishment of industry consensus guidelines and standards. Ten regional councils make up NERC to coordinate reliability and security of the system.

GEORGIA’S SYSTEM

The strength of Georgia’s system is a network of high voltage transmission lines that carry the power from generation plants to local distribution substations. Electricity is transported from generation to distribution facilities over 16,000 miles of lines owned and operated by participants in our Integrated Transmission System (ITS). The participants are: Georgia Transmission Corporation, Georgia Power, MEAG Power and Dalton Utilities. ITS owners engage in joint planning to ensure any transmission facility built for the ITS has the maximum possible benefit to all ITS participants.

Ronald Crews Submits Winning Entry in OREMC's Employee Customer Satisfaction Resolution Competition.....



*A*t OREMC our goal is to provide quality reliable electric service for our 29,000 members in Georgia and Florida. We also strive to offer the best customer service possible. With those goals in mind, OREMC sponsors an annual competition for employees to submit resolutions that focus on the importance of providing excellent customer service for our member/consumers. An all-expense-paid overnight stay for two at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel on Amelia Island, Florida, is awarded to the employee who submits the winning slogan each year. A stay at the Ritz-Carlton, widely touted as the ultimate experience in customer service, offers our winning employee an opportunity to bask in the luxury of personal attentiveness—and gives them a chance to pick up ideas for better serving our members.

Ronald Crews, OREMC Human Resources Director, was selected as the winner of this year's Customer Satisfaction Resolution competition with the following entry:

Customer Satisfaction— Our Connection to a Bright Future

If You're Not Satisfied, We're Not Satisfied

As your locally owned and managed cooperative electric utility, we at OREMC work hard to meet your needs as consumer-owners and the needs of our community too!

Our business is to provide electric service as reliably and economically as possible. But the bottom line – the foundation of our day-to-day work – is the satisfaction from co-op member-owners as well as our colleagues and business associates.

That's the cooperative way of conducting business. Quality electric service, enhancing the quality of life, and meeting our members' and neighbors' needs – it's a formula we're proud of and that works for the nation's 1,000 electric cooperatives.

So please share your ideas and thoughts with us because if you're not satisfied, neither are we!





School Days

It's back-to-school time across America. For parents, it's a bittersweet reminder of the passage of time as we watch our children grow and become increasingly independent. It's also a time when we think about their safety.

OREMC and the electric cooperatives across the nation share that concern. That's why so many are looking out for the safety of our children. With the beginning of every school year, thousands of co-op line workers are keeping an eye out for children on their way to or from school. Sometimes it means helping a disabled school bus. Frequently, it means using their mobile communications to report a problem or a suspicious occurrence in a neighborhood. And always it means being there to lend a hand, whatever the problem.

Being committed to the community you serve means making the decision that service to the community involves more than just making sure your electric service is reliable. Even in these days when electric utilities are faced with complex business issues that are getting tougher every day, going the extra mile in consumer and community service is standard operating procedure for an

electric cooperative. It has to be that way because electric cooperatives are fundamentally different than for-profit electric utilities.

Every day now, we hear reports of other utility companies closing their local offices and moving out of town in order to save money. When that happens, their customers have to do business long distance, frequently talking to people hundreds and sometimes thousands of miles away. OREMC is different. Our first obligation is to our consumers. You can still stop by our local offices and talk to someone you know about any part of your service. And when you call our offices, you'll speak to someone nearby you can talk to about any aspect of your electric service.

At first glance, it may seem that there is little connection between school kids waiting for their bus and the line crew in OREMC's trucks. But look again. Those line crews working on utility poles probably have kids waiting for their school bus alongside yours. Making sure all our children stay safe is part of what holds local communities together and it's part of the work your local electric cooperative — OREMC — takes pride in every day.

It Pay to be a Member of A Cooperative...

Capital Credits Assigned for 2002

Okefenoke REMC operates as a cooperative, a nonprofit organization owned by the members it serves. And one of the benefits of being a member of a cooperative is that all profits (called margins) are returned to the member/owners.

Each year, after all expenses are paid, all margins are distributed to members who received electric service from OREMC during that year. The margins are prorated to each account according to the member's total billing for the year.

Margins are also assigned to OREMC by other cooperatives and nonprofit organizations, such as our power suppliers. These margins are also prorated to members based on their total billing for the year on each account.

Capital credits are retained for several years before being refunded to members. The money is used instead of borrowed capital to fund expenses for distribution facilities and general plant. This reduces the Cooperative's interest expense and, ultimately, saves the members money.

Margins (profits) from OREMC's operations during 2002 totaled \$407,525. An additional \$517,382 was assigned to OREMC by power suppliers (Oglethorpe Power Corporation, Smarr, Sewell Creek, Georgia Transmission Corporation, and Georgia System Operations Corporation). OREMC's margins represent 1.04% and assignments from associated organizations represent 1.31% of last year's total margins, giving a total annual margin of 2.35%.

In order to calculate your capital credit assignment for 2002 multiply the total of your electric bills, less taxes, by .0235 (2.35%).

EXAMPLE:

If your total 2002 billing (less taxes) was	Multiply by percentage	To find your assignment
\$500	.0235	\$11.75
\$1000	.0235	\$23.50

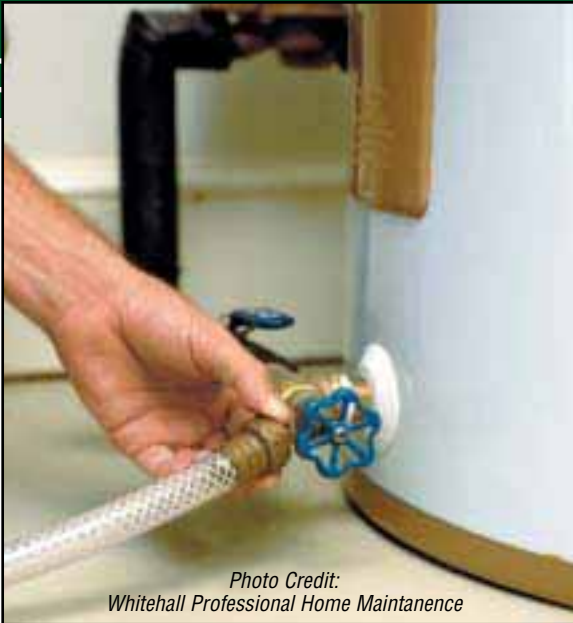


Photo Credit:
Whitehall Professional Home Maintenance

Maintaining Your Water Heater

Your water heater is one of your home's hardest working appliances. A little maintenance can improve its efficiency, speed its ability to heat water, and lengthen its life.

One of the best ways to save water heating energy and to extend your water heater's life is to lower the thermostat to a cooler setting. A setting of 120°F provides sufficient hot water for most families, reduces the chance of scalding, and decreases wear on your water heater's tank.

Read the manufacturer's instructions to learn how to adjust your water heater's thermostats, and be sure to turn the power off before opening the covers on an electric heater. Use a thermometer to gauge the temperature at each faucet in your home.

Corrosion, scale, and sediment are the enemies of your water heater:

- Corrosion happens faster in hotter water. Your water heater is built with a sacrificial anode that helps protect the steel tank by providing a replaceable component that sacrifices itself to the naturally occurring corrosive compounds in the water. This anode should be replaced periodically.
- Scale is the solid material that is normally in solution in water. Again, scaling happens more quickly at high temperatures. Scale reduces the efficiency of your water heater by clinging to the electric elements, or by coating the top of the gas burner.
- Sediment is small particles of debris that settle out on the bottom of your water heater. A drain valve at the bottom of every water heater provides a way to drain sediment from the tank. If sediment covers the elements of an electric water heater, they'll quickly burn out. Gas water heaters are also less efficient if the burner is covered with a layer of insulating sediment. If your water heater rumbles or makes other noises, you probably have a build up of sediment in the tank.

For more information about maintaining your water heater, point your web browser to <http://waterheaterrescue.com>.

Source: John Krigger, Saturn Resource Management, www.residential-energy.com

OREMC Surplus Equipment Auction Scheduled

OREMC will be holding an auction of surplus and salvage equipment at the headquarters office of the Cooperative on Saturday September 20, 2003. Many items will be offered to the general public for bid. Gates will open at 8:00 a.m. for inspection of items offered for bid, with sales beginning at 9:00 a.m.

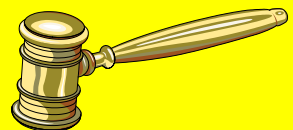
The auctioneer commissioned for the event is Jeffrey Lee, Nahunta, GA (License # 002573). A ten-percent buyers premium will be added to all sales.

All bidders planning to use sales tax exemption must present a Sales and Use Tax Certificate of Exemption (Form ST-5) to OREMC Office Manager Joyce Strickland by Wednesday, September 17, 2003. Without proper exemption certificate, sales tax will be added to all purchases. Sales tax exemption forms are available at the OREMC headquarters office in Nahunta. For questions or more specific information regarding sales and use tax exemption, contact Joyce Strickland at 800-262-5131 or 912-462-5131, extension 119.

For more information regarding the auction or for a listing of items offered for bid, contact Paul Bowers at 1-800-262-5131 or 912-462-5131, extension 156, Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

OREMC Reserves the Right to Refuse Any Offer

RAIN CANCELS. In the event of cancellation due to rain, an alternate date of Saturday, September 27, 2003 has been scheduled for the auction.



FAMILY FEATURES

Pansy P's and Q's

- * Plant pansies in the fall for best results and for color in the spring.
- * Planted under deciduous trees, the winter sun will warm them and later leaves will shade from summer's heat.
- * Perk up February pansies with water-soluble fertilizer for a quicker picker upper.
- * Plant drifts of colored pansies and merge and blend colors to each other.
- * Pansies are edible; try garnishing your plates and table with splashes of color.
- * Plant your spent summer pots with pansies.
- * Press your favorite pansy blooms for making stationery or gifts.
- * Potpourri with pansies. Dry the blooms on a screen in a dark, dry room, and mix with essential oils.
- * Pansy signifies fond memories.

—Hastings Garden News, October 2002



This month's featured recipe was submitted by Ms. Rhonda Raulerson, Glen St. Mary, FL. She has been given a \$25.00 credit on her electric energy account.

"This cake is a cool and refreshing," says Ms. Raulerson.

Party Time Pina Colada Cake

- 1 pkg. yellow cake mix
- 1 (15 oz.) can Coco Lopez Cream of Coconut*
- 1 (16 oz.) can crushed pineapple, drained
- 2 cups whipped cream of non-dairy whipped topping
- 2 Tbsp. coconut, toasted (optional)

Prepare and bake yellow cake mix in a 9 x 13 inch pan, according to directions. After cooled, poke holes in the top with a fork. Spread cream of coconut evenly over top of cake. Sprinkle pineapple over top and spread whipped cream or topping over all. Sprinkle with coconut, if desired, and chill until ready to serve. *Make day of party to feed your hungry team!*

*You can find the cream of coconut in the Taco section

NOTE: "It is better to use frozen coconut (usually near the piecrust). For variation of the recipe, I used 8 oz. coconut and did not use any pineapple. It was delicious," says Vicky Rehberg.

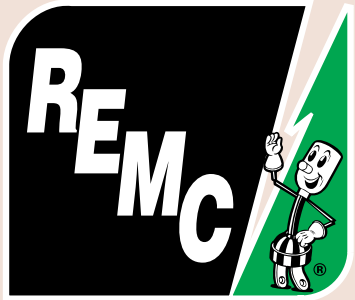
Submit your favorite recipe to Vicky Rehberg. Each month one recipe will be selected for publication and the person that submitted the recipe will receive a \$25.00 credit on their next month's bill.

SCRIPTURE

Proverbs 3:5

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

(Cut Here) ✂



OKEFENOKE RURAL ELECTRIC MEMBERSHIP CORPORATION

Published Monthly and mailed to members of Okefenoke Rural Electric Membership Corporation Nahunta, Georgia 31553

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"OWNED BY THOSE WE SERVE"

To nominate your church, contact Linda Harris, Ext.151.

Church of the Month

**Greater New Hope
Pentecostal Temple of Faith**

Brunswick, GA

Pastor: Rev. Delores Horne

Sunday School, every Sunday 10:00 a.m.

Morning Worship Service

1st & 3rd Sundays 11:30 a.m.

Bible Class, every Tuesday 7:30 p.m.

Joy Night, every Friday 7:30 p.m.

