

OFFICE HOURS

8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Monday through Friday

Speak to a Member Service Representative by
phone Monday - Friday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

CO-OP BUSINESS NUMBER

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"OWNED BY THOSE WE SERVE"

Power Up Safely When Using Portable Generators

Soon, storm season will be upon us, which means greater potential for power outages. If you have, or are thinking about getting, a portable generator to use in the event of an outage, OREMC reminds you to play it safe.

With proper use and maintenance, portable generators can provide great convenience during an outage. However, when generators are used incorrectly, they can be extremely hazardous. In a 2022 report, the Consumer Product Safety Commission estimated 85 U.S. consumers die every year from carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning caused by gasoline-powered portable generators.

Here are 10 do's and don'ts to keep in mind when using portable generators:

- **DO:** Install backup CO alarms.
- **DON'T:** Operate a generator inside your home or an enclosed (or partially-enclosed) space. Generators produce high levels of CO, which can be deadly.
- **DO:** Position generators at least 25 feet outside the home, away from doors, windows and vents that can allow CO to enter the home.
- **DON'T:** Open windows or doors while the generator is running.
- **DO:** Keep children and pets away from portable generators at all times.
- **DON'T:** Rely on generators as a full-time source of power. They should only be used temporarily or in emergency situations to power essential equipment or appliances.
- **DO:** Ensure your generator is properly grounded. Use a portable ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) to prevent electric shock injuries.
- **DON'T:** Overload generators. They should only be used to power essential

equipment. Make sure your generator can handle the load of the items you plan to power.

- **DO:** Use three-pronged extension cords that are rated to handle the load of the generator. Inspect extension cords for cuts, frays or other damage before use.
- **DON'T:** Connect generators directly into household wiring unless you have an appropriate transfer switch installed. If a generator is connected to a home's wiring without a transfer switch, power can backfeed along power lines and electrocute utility lineworkers making repairs.

While generators provide convenience during



power outages, they can quickly become hazardous—even deadly—if improperly operated. Before you operate a portable generator, be sure to thoroughly read the owner's manual for important safety information and tips.

If you have questions about proper use of portable generators, we're here to help. Give us a call at 800-262-5131.

Abby Berry writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives.



Wiring for the Future

OREMC Sponsors FFA Wiring Competition Practice Session

For the first time since 2019 (due to the pandemic), the OREMC/Brantley County FFA Wiring Contest practice session was held in December 2022. There were 14 students from surrounding Georgia counties who participated in the practice session, with seven competing in the timed challenge that took place at Brantley County High School. OREMC awarded cash prizes to the top three finishers: 3rd Place Jaycob Lee, Charlton County FFA, won \$25; 2nd Place John Lance, Ware County FFA, won \$50; and 1st Place Sam Mancil, Lanier County FFA, won \$100.

"We are pleased to once again be able to come together and give these kids the opportunity to experience real-world situations and be able to respond in an environment that supports their

understandings and gives them confidence in their skills and ability," OREMC Member Services Manager Dewayne Johns explained. "There is such a need in trades—electrical, plumbing, construction—that practice sessions and competitions like this one really give kids a taste of the kind of work they can do and that they can make good money doing it."

Open to high school students in grades nine through 12, the wiring competition is an Agricultural Electrification Career Development Event sponsored jointly by the Georgia FFA Association and the Georgia Electric Membership Corporation representing the state's 41 electric membership cooperatives.

Georgia FFA Association South Region Advisor Jerry Stone, facilitator of the practice session, noted, "I am elated that we are back doing this. The kids need the training and understanding of workforce requirements and opportunities. Our partnership with OREMC and all the EMCs is tremendous, and this is a great example of that."

The event is divided into three sections: a presentation/demonstration speech, problem solving questions and a wiring problem. Each section is timed and scored based on work completed and competency demonstrated. The top two winners from each of the six regions advance to the statewide competition.



Psalm 56:3-4

King James Version

³ What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee. ⁴ In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.

“Go to the winter woods: listen there, look, watch, and ‘the dead months’ will give you a subtler secret than any you have yet found in the forest. —William Sharp”



Washington Youth Tour Leadership Experience

"An immersive opportunity to learn about new places, new people, and . . . even about yourself."



" . . . make lasting connections with people all across the country."

Information and application available online at oremc.com/youth-tour. Applications can also be picked up at one of our office locations or mailed to you at your request.

Experience Washington, D.C., from A-Z

Make memories with new friends while *being immersed in monuments, museums, memorials and more* on the Washington Youth Tour Leadership Experience.

Annually OREMC sponsors four students to participate in the National Washington Youth Tour.

All students who are currently enrolled as a junior in high school within OREMC's eight county service area—Brantley, Camden, Charlton, Glynn, Ware and Wayne counties in Georgia and Baker and Nassau counties in Florida—are invited to apply.

Interested students must submit:

- a completed application
- attach two letters of recommendation and
- a short essay explaining why they are interested in the Youth Tour experience.

Application deadline February 22, 2023.

SOLAR OPTIONS

COOPERATIVE VS. ROOFTOP SOLAR



Considering solar energy for your home? You have a few options, including OREMC's Cooperative Solar Program, or a rooftop solar install, or both.

Cooperative Solar allows you to benefit from solar energy by subscribing to OREMC-owned solar arrays located in the most ideal conditions for solar energy production. OREMC takes on the risk of ownership and maintenance, while you receive your share of the sun without the hassle. Rooftop Solar allows you to generate your own solar energy by installing solar panels on your rooftop.

There are many important factors to consider—including whether or not your insurance company will provide homeowners insurance if rooftop solar is installed—to ensure that a rooftop solar system is designed to meet your needs, goals and financial objectives.

The chart below compares the differences.

	COOPERATIVE SOLAR	ROOFTOP SOLAR
Benefit from solar energy without solar panels installed on your roof	✓	✗
Does not require you to own your home	✓	Unlikely If you want to install rooftop solar on a home you don't own, you'll need to gain approval from the homeowner and your neighborhood homeowners association.
Does not require modifications to your roof	✓	✗ A rooftop solar installation will require roof modifications to ensure that the panels are safety mounted.
Does not require management of potential shading from trees	✓	✗ Large trees can shade solar panels and limit their solar energy production. Nearby tree limbs may need to be trimmed from time to time.
Does not require approval from your homeowners association	✓	Maybe Based on your neighborhood covenants, your homeowners association may need to approve your rooftop solar installation.
Does not require you to be responsible for solar panel maintenance	✓	✗ Just like other home appliances, routine inspections, monitoring and system cleanings will be important to keep your panels operating efficiently.
No long-term contract	✓	Maybe Rooftop solar installations require a significant investment. Unless you pay for your system upfront, you'll likely need a financing arrangement to pay over time.
No financing fees	✓	Maybe Based on how you choose to pay for your rooftop solar system, you may incur financing or leasing fees.
Interconnection agreement not required	✓	✗ Completing OREMC's interconnection agreement prior to a rooftop solar installation is required to ensure that your system meets safety and reliability requirements.

Let our OREMC Energy Advisors help you evaluate your solar energy options by calling 800-262-5131. You can also review our online Solar Information Guide at oremc.com/solar-info-guide.

Listen In on our Plugged In Podcast

Episode 8: Promoting Literacy with Ferst Readers

Promoting early childhood literacy as a foundation for learning and future success is the mission of Ferst Readers. OREMC is a proud partner of Ferst Readers and has helped establish chapters in several of our communities. Communications/Marketing Coordinator Michele Hutchins talks with Member Services Manager Dewayne Johns and Ferst Readers Program Manager Michelle Maddox about the history of the program, OREMC's support and plans moving forward.

Tune in on Amazon, Apple, Google, Spotify or listen online at oremc.com/publications, then click the Podcasts tab.



OREMC Storytime Launched

Reading a child a story and sharing the magic of books is the intent behind OREMC Storytime that launched on January 21. Each Sunday afternoon at 1 p.m. a new book will be shared on our Facebook page and read by OREMC employees, directors/trustees or community members. Just another way to help promote early childhood literacy—and entertain our littlest members—in partnership with Ferst Readers.



Church of the Month

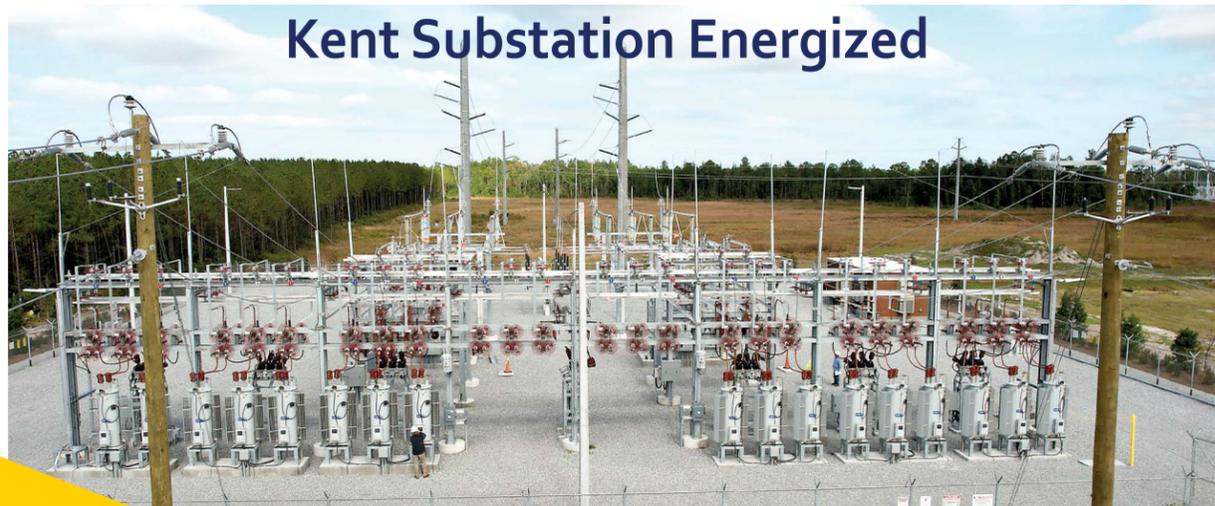
Emanuel Baptist Church

1895 Will Cox Rd. • Waycross, GA

Sunday Service 10:30 a.m. • Mike Walker, Pastor

To nominate your church, contact Dewayne Johns at 1-800-262-5131 Ext. 1143 or email dewayne.johns@oremc.com

Kent Substation Energized



Powered Up! OREMC's new 230 kV Kent Substation—a joint venture with FPL at the Crawford Diamond Industrial Park in Callahan—is energized. Two of the six circuits are serving West Nassau County, providing room to grow and increased capacity, as well as system redundancy to facilitate enhanced reliability.