



# POWERLINES

March 2020

The Official Newsletter of Tri-State Electric Membership Corporation

## 2020 Census: Make Sure You're Counted

**C**ensus 2020 is almost here! What is it and why is it important to you?

Since 1790, the U.S. Census Bureau has conducted a national census every 10 years. The purpose of the census is to establish an accurate count of the nation's population.

The information collected in the census is used to:

- Allocate federal funding to states and local governments
- Assist federal and state agencies in administering programs
- Determine congressional representation
- Do redistricting
- Help counties plan for needed future resources

It matters to you and your community! Failure to count just 10 households containing 2.5 people in your county could result in the loss of more than \$300,000 over the 10-year census period.

### GET IT DONE EARLY!!

- **March 2020:** The census survey is mailed to homes. Respond for your home in one of three ways: online, by phone or by mail.
- **April 1, 2020:** Census Day is observed nationwide. By this date, every home will receive an invitation to participate in the 2020 Census. **When you respond to the census, you tell the Census Bureau where you live as of April 1, 2020.** You can fill out the survey as soon as you get it, even if it's before April 1.



- **April 2020:** Group quarter counts, such as nursing homes, college dorms, etc., will be handled by the facility and trained census workers.
- **May 2020:** The Census Bureau begins visiting homes that haven't responded to the 2020 census to make sure everyone is counted.
- **August 2020:** The online form of the census will close.

## Downed Power Lines Always Pose a Risk, So Be Careful



**Y**ou teach your children not to mix water and electricity in the bathroom, kitchen and laundry room. But when a storm knocks down power lines, do your kids know to stay far away from them?

Here's what your family needs to know:

- If someone comes into contact with electricity, do not touch that person or anything the person is touching. Instead, call 911. If the source of electricity is an appliance, grab the plug—not the cord—and pull it out of the outlet. If you cannot safely remove

the plug, turn off the power at the fuse or circuit breaker.

- If an electric wire falls on your car, do not get out of the car. You are safe inside your vehicle because your tires conduct electricity. Electricity seeks the quickest path to the ground—through the outside of the car, through the tires and into the ground.
- Not all power lines are insulated, so they are never safe to touch. When a wire falls to the ground, it may still be live, even if you don't see sparks. Call 911 if you see a downed wire. Warn others to keep their distance.
- Wood is a poor conductor of electricity, but it is still a conductor, especially when wet. Do not use a wooden ladder near a power line. If a ladder begins to fall into a power line, don't grab it. Let it fall, and call Tri-State EMC at (706) 492-3251.
- Only pure rubber is an insulator, and most household products aren't pure rubber.
- Don't try to handle electric emergencies at home yourself; call a professional.

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## Tri-State EMC

2310 Blue Ridge Drive  
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Find us online:  
[www.tsemc.net](http://www.tsemc.net)

### Office Hours

Mon-Fri, 7:15 a.m.– 4 p.m.  
Closed Saturday and Sunday

### Report outages

Call us at (706) 492-3251

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Tri-State Electric Membership Cooperative is a not-for-profit, member-owned power cooperative providing electricity to the people of Cherokee County, NC; Polk County, TN; and Fannin County, GA.



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## West Fannin Elementary School Teachers Awarded STEM Grants from TVA

Two teachers at West Fannin Elementary School in Blue Ridge, Ga., have received STEM (Science Technology, Engineering and Math) grants from the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA).

Karen Goode earned a \$5,000 grant for water quality, chemical and bacterial testing for their stream. Kim Patterson was awarded a \$3,500 grant for kindergarten through second-grade robotics.

The awards are part of \$600,000 in competitive STEM grants presented to 142 schools across TVA's service territory. The competitive grant program provides teachers an opportunity to apply for up to \$5,000. Preference was given to grant applications that explored TVA's primary areas of focus: environment, energy, economic and career development and community problem-solving. Schools who receive grant funding must receive their power from a TVA distributor.

"This is the second year we offered this program to the entire valley, and we saw a major increase in grant applications this year," says Community Engagement Senior Program Manager Rachel Crickmar. "There is a demand in the valley for workforce development through STEM education, and I am proud of the way TVA and our retirees are responding to that demand by supporting teachers in the classroom."



### Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Placing hot food in the refrigerator makes the appliance work harder than necessary, using more energy. Allow food to cool down before you place it in the fridge.