

Operation Round Up: Give a Little, Help a Lot

Recent Recipients

Fannin Literacy Action Group (FLAG)

FLAG offers free GED prep, reading and math improvement and ESL.



Fannin County Middle School

Special education classes received funding for in-touch math to help students learn to add and subtract.

The Craddock Center

The Craddock Center provides books for preschool and elementary-age children in the Tri-State EMC area.

Copper Basin Elementary garden project

Copper Basin Elementary School's garden project is designed to teach students self-reliance as they learn to plan, prepare, construct, maintain and harvest a vegetable garden. Students learn how to use basic garden tools, including shovels, rakes, hoes and wheelbarrows. Produce grown and harvested is sent home with club members as well as those who need fresh produce at home.



About Operation Round Up

As a Tri-State EMC (TSEMC) member, you have a unique opportunity to support Operation Round Up (ORU), a program that provides financial support to organizations within the three counties served by the cooperative. All that is required is to round up your power bill.

How does Operation Round Up work?

If you participate, TSEMC will automatically round each participating member's electric bill up to the next dollar each month. For example, a bill of \$73.46 would become \$74. On average, you contribute \$6 a year—a small amount to help worthy causes in our community. It works out to less than the cost of one soft drink, candy bar or cup of coffee a month. This small monthly contribution can make a huge impact.

How will the money be used?

The Tri-State Electric Membership Corporation Foundation Inc. was created to disburse the money collected by ORU. Requests for assistance will be evaluated and grants awarded by a separate Board of Directors, made up of volunteer members from Tri-State EMC counties. The primary purpose of Operation Round Up is to address charitable needs and provide financial assistance anywhere in the three counties served by Tri-State EMC.

One hundred percent of your contributions go toward improving the lives of others.

How do I join?

Contact the TSEMC office at (706) 492-3251 to sign up for Operation Round Up.



Sign Up for E-bill

Reduce paper clutter by enrolling in e-bill, Tri-State EMC's paperless billing solution. When you sign up for e-bill, you receive an email each month when your current monthly bill is ready to be viewed. This email will provide a link to your bill.

You can also pay your bill online! (All online payments are processed by SEDC.) Better yet, sign up for automatic draft and have your monthly bill debited from your credit card, checking or savings account.

E-bill eliminates the paper billing while providing the same information. Anytime you need a hard copy of your bill, just contact the office or print it out directly from your computer.

E-bill is provided through a secure server, so your information is private and safe. E-bill is fast, informative, simple and secure. Call TSEMC at (706) 492-3251 today to sign up for e-bill.



It's Your Money, and Every Kilowatt Counts

MyUsage.com

Have you ever been surprised when your electric bill comes in the mail? You think, "How in the world could I have used that much electricity?" Now there is a way to keep close tabs on how much electricity you use each day.

Myusage.com is a program that will help you become more aware of the energy you consume. Participants report using less electricity by monitoring it daily, rather than waiting to see energy use on a monthly bill.

It's so simple. Just as you watch the gas gauge in your car, now you can watch how much electricity you use. When you sign up, you can view your daily use online, receive use alerts by email and customize alerts to let you know when consumption goes over the limits you set.

You can sign up online now with your TSEMC account number and meter number (found on your electric bill) by going to *myusage.com*.



Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Some manufacturers set water heater thermostats at 140 degrees, but most households usually only require them to be set at 120 degrees. Consider lowering your water heater's temperature to save energy and slow mineral buildup in the heater and pipes.

Source: *energy.gov*



Take Steps to Avoid Being a Scam Victim



The world, it seems, never lacks for folks who want to separate you from your hard-earned money. Electric cooperative members are some of the hardest-working and most trusting people in the nation. Identity thieves and scammers have caught on to this and are preying on unsuspecting members by pretending to be co-op employees.

Reportedly, imposters call and demand bill payment over the phone by credit card. Some scammers may not take no for an answer and repeatedly call back demanding money, getting more and more aggressive each time. They may call late at night or on weekends when Tri-State EMC's office is closed.

Never give out your personal information—credit card numbers, Social Security number or bank account numbers—over the phone unless you initiate the call. If anyone calls soliciting this information, hang up immediately and call your local police or sheriff's office.

Tri-State EMC employees never call and demand payment over the phone. Call us at (706) 492-3251 if you have questions about your account.

Our employees drive vehicles that are clearly marked with the co-op's name. If you suspect someone might be an imposter, ask for identification. Call the TSEMC office and verify the information.

Remember, protect your information like it is a hidden treasure chest and only you have the key. Thieves see your information as treasure to be stolen, so do not give others access to it.

Tri-State EMC

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Find us online:
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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This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Right-of-Way Work Keeps You Connected

The first time many people encounter the term “right-of-way” is in a driver’s manual or on a driver’s license test. It brings to mind something you have (or yield) when you’re behind the wheel of a motor vehicle.

But in the electric co-op world, “right-of-way” (ROW) takes on an important alternate meaning. It refers to the corridor or path an electric line follows, either along a road or through the woods.

Trees and branches that are downed by storms are a primary cause of power outages. Co-ops across Georgia have developed aggressive right-of-way maintenance programs, routinely trimming vegetation near power lines that could become a problem. Storms still may bring down branches or trees, but the trimmed-back vegetation is far enough from power lines that it is much less likely to fall across them.

“A good right-of-way program reduces outages a lot,” says Harry Reeves, Georgia EMC’s Vice President of training, education and safety. “It also makes troubleshooting a lot easier.”

Trees along a utility ROW increase the possibility of power outages and blinks. They also can delay power restoration after storms because fallen trees and debris must be cleared before crews can gain access to damaged poles or lines.

Large trees around utility rights-of-way pose a safety hazard by providing children an opportunity to play near power lines. Power lines can carry up to 14,400 volts, and an energized tree branch is extremely dangerous—even deadly. When a tree limb comes in contact with a power line, someone touching or climbing the tree could be shocked or even electrocuted. It also can produce a spark, which can start a

fire, especially if the area is very dry.

Each electric cooperative member agrees in the membership application to grant the cooperative a right-of-way easement, giving permission to cut and keep clear all trees within a set distance of primary and secondary power lines and service lines.

The distance allowed for clearing vegetation for Tri-State EMC is 20 feet on each side of a primary power line. The clearing cycle ranges from four to six years. Some co-ops use their own employees to do right-of-way work, while others hire contract crews.

Proper reclearing consists of removing trees, mowing underbrush, controlling vegetation growth and trimming limbs that extend into the right-of-way.

Many times trees that are outside of the allowed cutting area of the ROW are responsible for outages. The trees and/or tree limbs are not within the ROW, but the trees are tall enough to strike the wires when they fall.

If you believe that a tree on your property poses a threat to a power line, call Tri-State EMC at (706) 492-3251.

In addition, when planting a tree in your yard, keep in mind the tree’s size at maturity. The larger the full-grown tree will be, the farther it needs to be from a power line.

The need for electricity to power the many devices in modern life has increased the importance of reducing the potential for outages, including by keeping rights-of-way cleared. “The demand of technology is why we have to do such a good job,” Reeves says. “We’re so dependent on technology; we can’t do without it.”