



Line Items

The Official
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Of Excelsior EMC

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RESTORING A BROKEN POLE

Have you ever wondered why it sometimes takes our crews longer to restore your power than other times? Restoring power is no easy task, and it becomes even harder when the infrastructure must be replaced – like a broken or worn power pole. Harsh weather conditions and car crashes can cause major and immediate damage, but every so often poles need to be replaced because of deterioration caused by exposure to the elements.

Excelsior EMC employees and contract crews are constantly on the lookout for weathered or damaged infrastructure that needs replacing. This takes time, however, due to the Cooperative maintaining over 3,375 miles of power line!

When a pole needs to be replaced, the following factors can have a tremendous effect on how long the replacement will take: the extent of the damage to the pole; its location; what type of equipment will be able to gain access to the pole; whether it is single-phase or three-phase; and as always, weather conditions. Depending on these factors and more, a single pole replacement can take over 12 hours!

Crews must first carefully measure and dig a hole – typically right next to the old pole. Before the new power pole can be raised, it must be fitted with the proper bolts, cross arms, insulators, ground wires, and braces.

After the pole has been fitted with the required parts, line crews must carefully use their tools and safety equipment to detach power lines from the old pole or insulate the lines if they are staying in place. Whether the lines are energized (“working it hot”) or de-energized (“dead” or “grounded”), crews follow strict protocol to ensure that all safety rules are followed.

Once the lines have been properly located and insulated or grounded, the new pole is raised, guided into position and set, and the electric lines are carefully moved and attached to the new pole’s insulators with tie wires or clamps. When all live lines are securely in place, the crew then detaches equipment from the old pole and removes it.

Pole changeouts are administered during the day and night, through rain and ice, and in extreme heat or cold. Much of the area we encounter here in south Georgia can prove difficult to access, so trucks must be winched in and out of tight and boggy places. In some places where we can’t get equipment to, tasks like digging a hole or climbing a pole have to be done manually.

If your lights go out and it is taking longer than normal for them to come back on, please keep in mind that our Excelsior EMC line crews are working as quickly and as safely as they can to restore your power and maintain the integrity of our distribution system.



Pictured above is an Excelsior EMC construction crew performing a pole replacement. Notice the amount of equipment and personnel required.

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BRONSON BRAGDON
Editor

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When Your Power is Off – Call (912) 685-2115 or (912) 764-2123

When your power goes off, don't stay in the dark longer than you have to. To restore your power as quickly as possible, we need your correct phone number. Your phone number is the quickest way for us to locate your home or business when you call to report an outage.

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Between the Lines

by
Greg Proctor
President/CEO

Be Prepared

Tropical storm season is here. As I write this article, 11 storms with tropical characteristics have already developed in the Atlantic basin. The first one developed in mid-May, even before the official start of Hurricane season, which was June 1. Hurricane season runs until November 30. With the tropical activity to date coupled with the COVID-19 pandemic, this may turn into a longer summer and fall than we would like.

Think back to October of 2016 when Hurricane Matthew caused significant damage to the Excelsior EMC system. During that storm, over 90% of our system was without power. Hurricane Irma brought high winds and damage in September of 2017, knocking out power to 80% of the system. Hurricane Michael ripped through the state in October of 2018 interrupting service to 52% of the system. Last year brought a reprieve from the damage, but the threat of Hurricane Dorian forced us to activate our emergency plan and bring in extra manpower just in case.

Why am I reminding you of these past events? Remembering the past helps us to plan for the future, and I want you to be prepared.

Excelsior EMC maintains a detailed storm response plan that is activated when a major weather event is predicted to impact our system. During a major storm event, outside line personnel are brought in to assist our own crews, which results in a quicker restoration of power.

In light of the challenges that COVID-19 presents, we will implement additional protective measures to restrict contact and limit the potential spread among the additional line personnel on our system. Even something as simple as providing meals for our crews during storms will have to change. It is no longer safe for storm personnel to sit elbow to elbow as they take a moment to recharge and receive safety and progress briefings.

Major storms can result in you being out of power for multiple days, so I'm asking you to take the necessary steps now to assist us in being prepared before a storm hits. Here are a few tips:

- Create a family disaster supply kit with non-perishable food, water, a battery-operated radio, flashlights, a first aid kit, a non-electric can opener, medicines and cash. Don't forget to think about how COVID-19 may affect the items in your kit. You might want to add face coverings and hand sanitizer to the list.
- Make sure portable, rechargeable cell phone batteries are charged and accessible.
- Update your Excelsior EMC account with your family's cell phone numbers.
- Follow local government, emergency management agencies and Excelsior EMC on Facebook to stay up to date with information before, during, and after a disaster. EEMC's mobile app has links to our Facebook page and outage maps.
- Please don't wait until disaster strikes to react.

I urge you to take a few minutes now to review your account information and to take the necessary steps to be prepared.



Every Member Counts



ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIPS FOR HUNTERS

This hunting season, we encourage all members to be aware of electrical equipment and take necessary precautions while hunting. Keep these safety tips in mind as you enjoy the great outdoors.



Take notice of posted warning signs and keep clear of electrical equipment.



Do not shoot at or near power lines or insulators.



Know where power lines and equipment are located on the land where you hunt.



Be especially careful in wooded areas where power lines may not be as visible.



Do not place deer stands on utility poles or climb poles. Energized lines and equipment can conduct electricity to anyone who comes in contact with them, causing shock or electrocution.



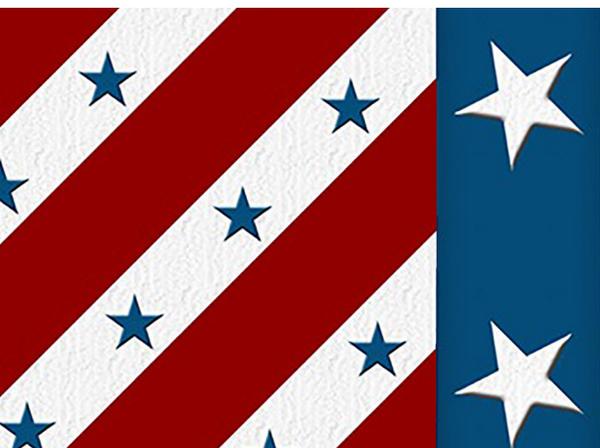
Do not place decoys on power lines or other utility equipment. Any non-electrical equipment attached to a pole can pose an obstruction and serious hazards to our line crews.



HARVEST SAFETY TIP

Consider equipment and cargo extensions of your vehicle. Lumber, hay, tree limbs, irrigation pipe and even bulk materials can conduct electricity, so keep them out of contact with electrical equipment.

Local farmer Blake Johnson climbs out of the cab of his cotton picker to check for clearance as he approaches a three-phase power line.



In observation of **Labor Day**

**Our offices will be closed
Monday, September 7, 2020**

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