



Line Items

The Official
Newsletter
Of Excelsior EMC

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TALKING TREES: Help Us Keep the Power Flowing



Josh Holland

At Excelsior EMC, we strive every day to provide you, our members, with the most reliable service possible. There are many ways we go about doing this, but one of the most important is managing vegetation around our distribution lines.

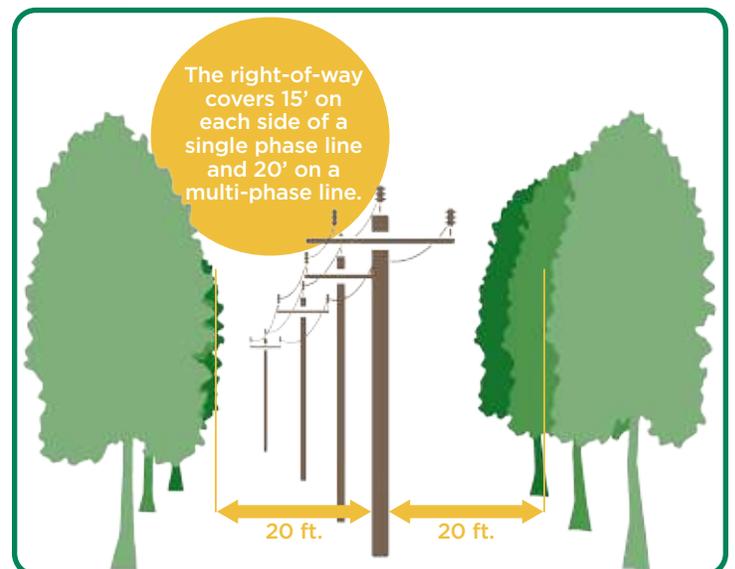
As Excelsior EMC's Operations Specialist, it's Josh Holland's job to see that trees don't grow too close to the co-op's power lines. Tree limbs that come in contact with power lines are a major contributor to power outages. If a limb or tree breaks and falls, which frequently happens during Georgia's stormy seasons, they can bring power lines and poles down with them.

"Trees add tremendous value to our community, whether they are in a front yard, a managed timber tract, or growing wild in a forest, but they are also the number one cause of outages on our system. Although it's impossible to avoid all outages, maintaining this area around our lines greatly helps to reduce outages, which is what we are here to do." Josh said.

Josh has been in this position with Excelsior EMC for nearly four years and has undergone extensive on-the-job and classroom training. Just recently, in May, he earned the credential of Certified Arborist from the International Society of Arboriculture. To earn this certification, he had to attain a high level of knowledge in tree biology, diagnosis, maintenance practices, tree risk assessment, safety, and other areas. This certification is important because it is Josh's responsibility to oversee the right-of-way crews that are responsible for maintaining over 3,400 miles of power lines on our system. This maintenance includes the constant removal of dead and at-risk trees, a 4-year system-wide trimming schedule, and a 3-year system-wide spraying schedule.

Excelsior EMC members can also do their part in maintaining the right-of-way as well, Josh reminds. Here are some tips and reminders from Josh that will help you and the co-op:

- The right-of-way area that we maintain is 15 feet on each side of a single-phase line and 20 feet on each side of a multi-phase line.
- When planting trees or shrubbery near our power lines, take into account how large it will be at full maturity. Any part of the tree or shrub that encroaches on the right-of-way will be sprayed or cut.
- When planting beside pad-mounted transformers (aka the big green box in your yard), keep in mind that we need 3 feet of clearance on each side and the back and 8 feet of clearance in front of the door.
- When adding fences or gates to your property, keep in mind that we need access to our equipment for maintenance and power restoration purposes.



Line Items

BRONSON BRAGDON
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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

Increased Power Cost and What to Do

Nationwide and globally, wholesale power costs have risen sharply. In great part it is because of the significant rise in natural gas prices for fuel that generates a substantial portion of the nation's electricity.

Unfortunately, The Energy Information Administration predicts that high prices will likely remain prevalent this year and next.

This is not good news for anyone. It is no surprise that we are all seeing higher prices for everything from gas to eggs. In addition to elevated power costs, Excelsior EMC is also paying more for transformers, poles, wire, meters, and everything else that it takes to serve our members. But, despite it all, we are working hard to control costs where we can.

What can you do? Every kWh you purchase adds to your bill. The simplest way to reduce the impact of the rising costs is to **use less**. In this case, conservation is king. There are many ways to do this without reducing comfort. Consider timers for water heaters and electronic thermostats to control your HVAC. You can also cut power to electronics when they are not in use by installing smart power strips. Check out the energy saver guide (<https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/energy-saver-guide-tips-saving-money-and-energy-home>) for tips on reducing energy and cost. Each family is different, but a few habit changes can truly make a difference.

Another way to avoid spiking bills is to adopt our **levelized billing** option. Your bill will be based on the average amount of your previous twelve-month history. Payments can be made automatically from your bank account, and they will be close to the same amount each month, so it's easier to budget. Contact our office to enroll.

Don't forget to take advantage of the **notifications** that are available through our website or app. These notifications can alert you if your energy use exceeds your limit. These reminders help you to make changes before you get your bill. They can also remind you when your payment is due.

We are driven to provide the most affordable and reliable electricity that we can. It is our mission every day, and it will remain in the forefront as we strive to serve you.



Every Member Counts

GRACE CATHERINE HOOD AWARDED THE WALTER HARRISON SCHOLARSHIP



Each year the Walter Harrison Scholarship program awards \$1,000 scholarships to high school seniors and undergraduate students attending any vocational school or two- or four-year accredited college or university in Georgia. More than \$250,500 has been awarded since the program began. The scholarships are awarded based on academic achievement, financial need, extracurricular activities, involvement, an autobiographical sketch, and recommendations.

Georgia's EMCs started the scholarship program in 1985 to honor the late Walter Harrison. Harrison was known in Georgia and across the nation as "Mr. Rural Electrification" for his pioneering efforts in the electrical cooperative industry and for his lifelong dedication to improving life in rural areas.

This year there were 78 applicants for the scholarship with only 14 scholarships awarded. Grace Catherine Hood was one of the lucky 14 to be selected to receive this honor. Grace Catherine is a recent graduate of David Emanuel Academy where she graduated as salutatorian. She plans to attend the University of Georgia in the fall to pursue a degree in Agricultural Business. Grace Catherine is the daughter of Clay and Allison Hood of Midville and she has one younger brother, Clayton. Please help us to congratulate Grace Catherine on her accomplishments and wish her all the best in her future endeavors!

American Spirit

Independence Day is a day to be celebrated by all Americans. On July 4th, communities throughout the United States of America will celebrate the American spirit and the freedoms that we were given. There will be beautiful red, white and blue ribbons, flags and banners strewn through the cities and countryside.

We at Excelsior EMC will proudly display our American Flag showing our gratitude for those who sacrificed for our independence and show our support of this great nation. We join the nation in saluting our independence. However, we are also always mindful of the potential hazards associated with overhead and underground power lines.

We encourage our members that choose to display flags, banners or ribbons, to do so safely. Please do not attach anything to Excelsior EMC poles. When standing flag poles high into the air, be aware of your surroundings and keep plenty of distance from overhead wires. Before digging the base of a flag pole, call 811 to verify no underground utilities are present. We hope that everyone has a safe and enjoyable Independence Day.

*Our offices will be closed on Monday, July 4th
in observance of Independence Day.*

Emergency personnel will be available by calling our
24-hour dispatch center at (912) 685-2115 or (912) 764-2123.

NEW FACE AT EXCELSIOR EMC



Jakob Kohn has been hired as an Engineering Intern. This position focuses on enlightening promising students or recent graduates of the career paths available through an electric cooperative while utilizing the skills they already possess to benefit the Cooperative. During this program, the intern will gain real life skills and work experience that will be beneficial to them as they seek to start their future careers.

Jakob is a native of McDonough, Georgia and a recent graduate of Georgia Southern University where he obtained his Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering. He is excited to have the opportunity to uphold Excelsior EMC's excellent standards of service. Please help welcome Jakob to the Excelsior EMC team.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month:

If you're looking to add smart technology to your home, consider smart plugs. Smart plugs are inexpensive and can be used to control lighting and other electronic devices through a smart phone app.

With smart plugs, you can conveniently manage lighting, home office equipment, video game consoles and more. By powering off unused devices when you're away, you can save energy (and money!).



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