

BEACON

Comments from the CEO



Todd Payne
President/CEO
Amicalola EMC

Delivering reliable power through smart investment

As your local power provider, Amicalola EMC’s mission has always been simple: Keep the lights on and support the communities we serve. But behind every switch, every warm home and every business that opens its doors is a complex system that requires constant care. Reliable electricity doesn’t happen by accident. It requires ongoing investment in our local grid—through system repairs, maintenance, upgrades and the integration of new technologies that help us operate smarter and more efficiently.

Much of the energy system we rely on today was built decades ago. While it continues to serve us well, age alone means that components must be repaired or replaced to maintain performance and safety. From poles and wires to transformers and substations,

every part of the grid has a lifespan. Routine maintenance helps extend that lifespan, but eventually equipment must be updated to meet modern standards.

Amicalola EMC, in collaboration with Georgia Transmission, recently added a new substation in Cherry Log, located on the north end of our service territory. Thanks to this project, we have been able to shorten circuits, ultimately getting us closer to the power source, which not only aids in capacity, but it helps us better serve our meters in the area. These proactive investments reduce the

likelihood of outages, shorten restoration times when disruptions do occur and create a stronger backbone for our growing community.

The demand on the electric grid is also evolving. Homes and businesses today use more electricity than ever, and that trend will only continue. Electric vehicles, advanced HVAC systems, smart appliances and new commercial facilities add load to the local distribution system. As these

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Photo of Cherry Log substation taken by Amicalola EMC Staff Engineer Ethan Taylor.



Amicalola EMC hosts Area Wiring Contest

The recent Area Wiring Contest held at Amicalola EMC in Jasper highlighted electrical skills of local students. John Rodney from Pickens High School earned first place and a \$500 scholarship. Ava Buice from Sonoraville High School placed second and received a \$300 scholarship.

Supported by the local FFA chapter and Amicalola EMC, the annual EMC/ FFA Career Development Event offers students hands-on experience in electrical wiring while strengthening critical thinking and communication skills. The contest provides a practical, real-world learning opportunity that



From left: First place winner John Rodney from Pickens High School alongside second place winner Ava Bruce from Sonoraville High School.

complements classroom instruction.

Both top finishers will advance to the State Agricultural Electrification Career Development Event being held on Saturday, March 7, at the Georgia FFA-FCCLA Center in Covington.

The FFA is a national organization dedicated to preparing students for leadership and careers in agriculture-related fields. Amicalola EMC proudly supports the FFA/EMC Wiring Contest program and congratulates both John and Ava on their achievements.

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technologies take hold, the grid must be able to support increased demand while maintaining the reliability our members expect.

At the same time, new technologies are reshaping how we operate. Tools such as automated switching devices, drones and advanced monitoring systems allow us to detect problems faster and respond more

effectively. These technologies can isolate problems, reroute power to minimize outages and provide real-time data that helps us plan and maintain equipment more efficiently. In 2025, we saved over 7 million outage minutes thanks to our automated outage switches. Implementing innovative technologies into the grid is not just a convenience, it's a necessity for ensuring reliability in an

increasingly complex energy landscape.

While these improvements require thoughtful planning and financial investment, the return is significant. A stronger grid supports economic growth, improves service quality and enhances safety for our crews and community. Most importantly, it ensures that the essential power you rely on is available whenever you need it.

Operation Round Up

There has been growing conversation about the U.S. government phasing out the penny. Because of rising production costs and declining use, the Department of Treasury does not believe continued production is fiscally responsible or necessary. While that may be true, one thing we know for certain: Small change can still make a big difference, especially right here at home.

That's the idea behind Amicalola EMC's Operation Round Up® program.

Instead of letting spare change sit unused, Operation Round Up allows members to round their electric bill up to the nearest dollar each month. That extra change—no more than 99 cents—goes directly into a local fund that supports charitable organizations, community projects and neighbors in need across our service area.

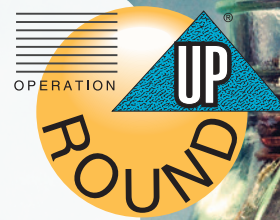
Think about it: If pennies fade away, we won't miss their value as much as we'd miss their

impact. Through Operation Round Up, small amounts add up quickly when thousands of members participate together. What feels like pocket change to one person becomes food for families, help for seniors and resources for local nonprofits.

The beauty of Operation Round Up is its simplicity. There's no writing checks, no fundraising events and no long-term commitment. Members can join or leave at any time, yet the collective effect is powerful and lasting. Every rounded-up bill is a reminder that generosity doesn't have to be big to matter.

If you're not already participating, consider enrolling today. Because even in a world without pennies, compassion and community will always be priceless.

Go to www.amicalola.com, Community, Operation Round Up to learn more and join today!



Retirements

Congratulations to Allen Hamrick on his retirement. Thank you for your years of dedicated service to the members of Amicalola EMC.



Allen Hamrick
38 years of service

Daylight Saving Time



Don't forget to spring forward on Sunday, March 8.

Process for electing directors

Members of Amicalola Electric Membership Corporation are reminded that nominations for the AEMC Board of Directors will be posted July 5, 2026. The Nominating Committee's recommendations for the board will be posted on the bulletin board at the main office in Jasper, Ga., and on the AEMC website.

The Amicalola EMC Bylaws state "that the committee on nominations shall make at least one nomination for each post for director to be voted on at the annual meeting. The committee shall prepare and post at the principal office of the Cooperative at least ninety (90) days (July 5, 2026) before the meeting, a list of nomina-

tions for directors, but any fifteen (15) or more members may make other nominations in writing over their signatures no less than sixty (60) days (Aug. 4, 2026) prior to the meeting, and the Secretary shall post the same at the same place where the list of nominations made by the committee is posted."

Are we holding your money?

Amicalola EMC is a not-for-profit electric cooperative; any excess revenues are returned to member-owners in the form of capital credits refunds. We are seeking to find members who have unclaimed capital credits on file. We would like to find a current address and refund these capital credits if possible. To determine if your name is on the

list, please call 706-253-5200 during regular business hours or visit any Amicalola EMC office. **You will be required to provide proof of identity to claim ownership.**

After a mandatory five-year waiting period, any unclaimed capital credits refunds are distributed in accordance with Georgia's unclaimed property laws O.C.G.A. §44-12-236.



ENERGY EFFICIENCY

TIP OF THE MONTH

As spring arrives, take advantage of milder temperatures to save energy at home. Open windows on pleasant days to bring in fresh air instead of running your HVAC system. It's also a great time to replace dirty air filters, which helps your system run more efficiently and improves indoor air quality. As daylight increases, turn off unnecessary lights and rely on natural sunlight when possible. Small seasonal adjustments like these can reduce energy use, lower monthly bills and help keep your home comfortable as winter transitions into spring.

